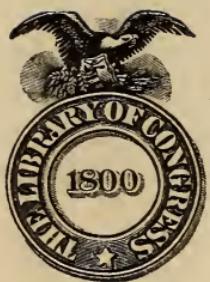
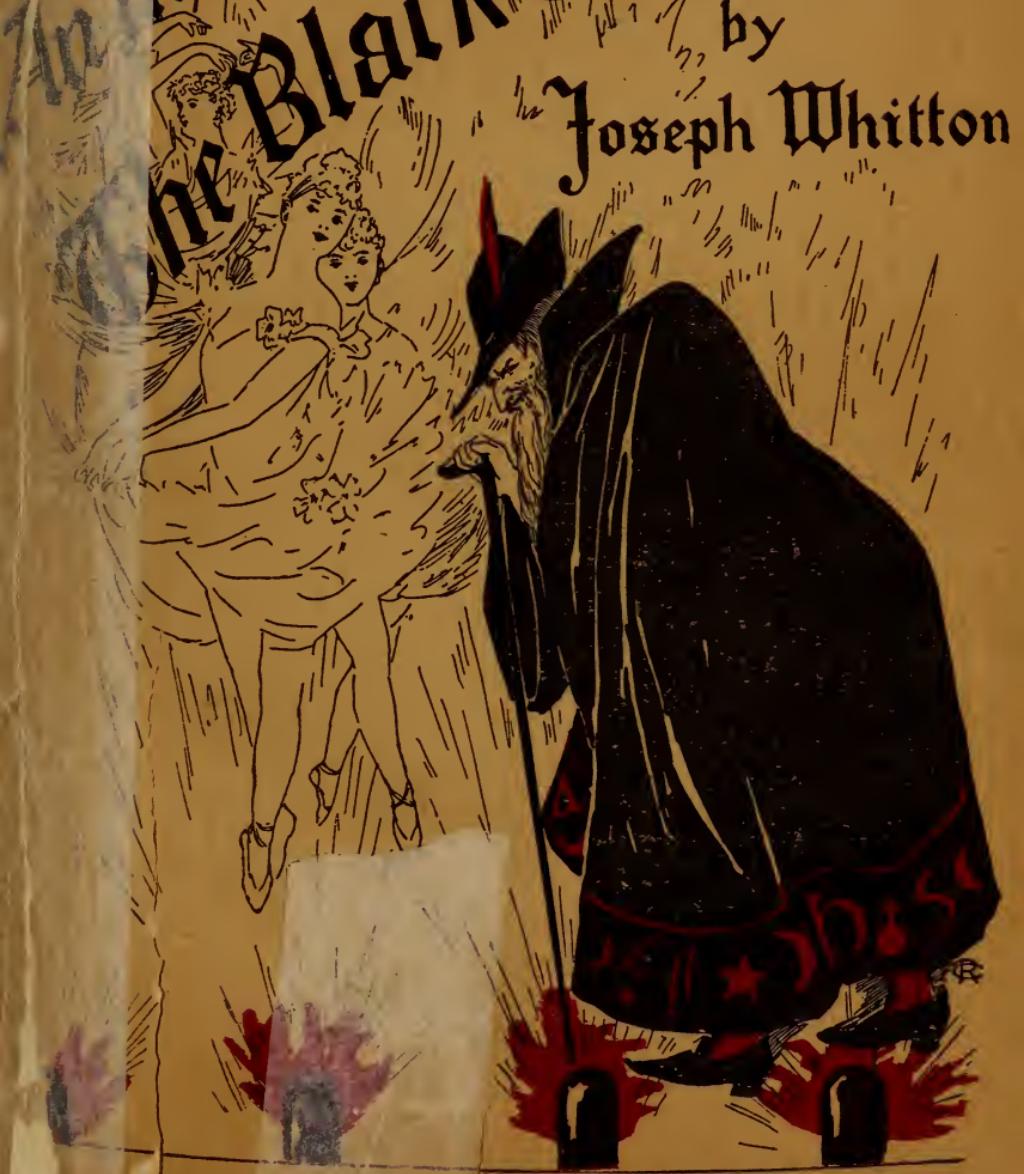


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nside History
of Black Crook
by
Joseph Whitton





“THE NAKED TRUTH!”

An Inside History

OF

The Black Crook

BY

JOSEPH WHITTON.



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PREFACE.

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IT is curious that the history of the Black Crook—the pioneer of the American Spectacular Drama, and greater in tinselled gorgeousness and money-drawing power than any of its followers—should never have been told, or, rather, truthfully told. There have been many professed records of it, no two of them alike, and all of them incorrect or incomplete. Now, if the matter be of sufficient importance to record at all, it is due to the reader that the backbone of the record, at least, be truth. With this view the narrator undertakes the task. His connection with the financial department of Niblo's Garden, previous to the production and during the run of the Crook, enables him to know the facts ; and these the reader also may know, if his patience be strong enough to bear him through the following pages.

J. W.

A SKELETON OF CONTENTS.

Jarrett & Palmer's search for "Staple Articles" and the "Beauties of Nature"—Silks and Satins *versus* Paper-muslin—Niblo's Garden the cradle of the Crook—Purchasing the right to play the great drama—The value of "a look into the seeds of Time"—The Crook's author begins to gather in his royal harvest—His love for a joke, and how he saddled one on an early caller—A city of bears and icebergs—A block in the way of the Crook's production—It took a \$10,000 broom to brush the way clear—Beginning preparations—Their costliness, and extent of outlay before completion—The outlay not long in coming back—The Barnum-Bennett squabble—A fox without a tail—The showman's diplomatic sand-bag, and how he used it—"This establishment does not advertise in the *New York Herald*"—Bennett and his gold-edged abuse—New York and Sodom and Gomorrah in the same boat—The virtues of smoked glass—The Pulpit's war on the Crook—Smyth's batteries at Cooper Institute—Bombarding the fair breastworks of the Crook—Brimstone has no terrors for the New Yorker—The Crook loses one of its props—Bill of the first night—Nightly expenses—Salaries of the Ballet—Length of run, and the fortunes made for those who had a finger in the Crook's pie—The Crook in a literary light—A hint to managers.

AN INSIDE HISTORY
OF
THE BLACK CROOK.

EARLY in the summer of '66 Messrs. Jarrett & Palmer—the wide-famed theatrical managers and speculators of those days—returned from Europe, whose principal cities they had ransacked in search of some gigantic attraction with which to dazzle and monopolize the attention of American theatre-goers and draw enough dollars from their pockets to comfortably line their own.

After ripe deliberation they decided that a Grand Ballet would be the proper thing. Jarrett's reasons for this were cogent, and his argument—as coming events were to prove—thoroughly sound. “Legs are staple articles, and will never go out of fashion while the world lasts. They top the list of the ‘Beauties of Nature,’ and

we will gather an array of them that will make even the surfeited New Yorker open his eyes and his pocket and hold his breath in astonishment."

Upon this line these cunning managers began their work. The most accomplished artistes and the prettiest women were picked from the leading theatres of London, Paris, Berlin, and Milan. No Ballet so complete in its *ensemble*, and with so ravishing a collection of the "Beauties of Nature," was ever before seen, or, if it were, certainly not by cisatlantic eyes.

The Ballet being completed, the next care of the managers was the costumes. These they had made in Paris, and with no regard to cost. The most expensive satins and silks were used, provided the needed effect and gorgeousness could not be obtained without them. No brummagem, no cheap sheen of paper-muslin, so long relied upon by the old-time economic manager to cheat the eyes of his patrons. All a true dream of splendor, a picture of glittering reality, to be hereafter displayed in a frame of bewildering enchantment.

When all was ready, the two managers, with their troupe and its belongings, took

passage for New York, arriving here, as I have said, in the early summer of '66.

Niblo's Garden was then considered the most popular of New York's theatres, and not—what in after years it became—too far down town for the convenience of amusement-seekers. The wholesale business houses were confined, with their nightly gloom and quiet, to that portion of Broadway which lies below Canal Street. Immediately above the latter, the great thoroughfare commenced its dizzy whirl. And dizzy enough it was, and giddy enough, and gaudy enough, to satisfy the most hilarious owl and upset the bile of the sedate. Niblo's was in the midst of it all. Over its broad entrance flashed a sign bearing the name, formed of illuminated globes, and of more colors than "Joseph's coat." It was one of the nightly features of New York's artery, and its main object was to stop the flow of frisky blood and coax the boodled substance into the coffers of the box-office.

The theatre was a complete one, famed for its beauty, and with a grip on public favor that some of its devotees thought everlasting. But, alas for the evanes-

cence of all earthly things ! The mortality of theatres seems no less sure than that of their goers ; and this one, so long the pride of the metropolis—this one, that cradled the Crook and nursed its growth into favor-hood—this one, that in the sixty-six years of its existence twice arose from its ashes, each time more beautiful than before, has at last given up the ghost, and now lies dead and buried with a sky-scraper for its tombstone.

But to resume. On their arrival in New York, Jarrett & Palmer called upon William Wheatley, who was then lessee and manager of Niblo's, told him of the attraction they had secured, and made a proposal that he should join them in the production of a spectacular drama, in which their Ballet would be introduced, using the stage of Niblo's for the purpose. Their proposal was accepted.

The next consideration was how and where to obtain a piece that would answer their purpose. Delay was dangerous, for the salaries of the troupe had to be paid, whether they performed or not. Besides, it would take time, and a good deal of it, to prepare for the production of a spectac-

ular piece in the style they contemplated. Their intention was to be ready with it by the first week in September, and to do this would tax every hour of the intervening time.

A few days after the agreement was signed between Jarrett & Palmer and Wheatley, and while I was busy over the books in the box-office, Wheatley sent word from his room in the Metropolitan that he wished to see me. When I entered he was busily occupied reading a manuscript, the nature of which my nearsightedness prevented me knowing. He did not keep me long in doubt. Holding up the MS. in one hand, while he brought the other down on the desk before him with a thwack that made the chandelier-drops rattle, he said, or, rather, shouted :

“My boy, congratulate me ; I have a fortune here.”

“Where?” I asked, in innocent astonishment.

“Where? Why here, in my very grasp.”

He stopped, looked again at the manuscript, and then handed it to me.

“Look over that, my dear fellow, and tell me what you think of it.”

I took the MS. and read upon the cover, in bold script letters, the words :

THE BLACK CROOK,

BY CHARLES M. BARRAS.

“Sit down, my boy, and take your time,” said Wheatley; “you surely can spare me an hour or two.”

Patiently did I devote myself to the task, and soon saw, what Wheatley had already seen, that here was the very piece to fit the Ballet—a clothes-line, as it were, on which to hang the pretty dresses, besides affording abundant opportunities for scenic display. True, there was no originality in the plot—if it had a plot at all—being a medley made up of the Naiad Queen, Undine, Lurline, and two or three other spectacular dramas of like nature. Still, originality was a matter of little moment. It was just the wanted piece in every other respect, and, if the plot had no originality, the title certainly had enough of it to insure, as I thought, the success of the play.

“Well,” asked Wheatley, as I laid down the MS., “what do you think of it?”

“Think of it? Well, my opinion is you’ll never find another piece so near to what you want.”

“So near? Why, it’s exactly what we want.”

“And what does Barras ask for his drama?”

“Ah, my boy, there’s the rub. His terms are these: Two thousand dollars for the sole right to play it in New York City; we to play it so long as we like, but there must be no intermission in its run; otherwise the contract ceases. What do you advise?”

My advice was short. “Accept his terms; the title alone is worth all he asks for the play.”

“That is all very well; but you forget that Jarrett & Palmer are entitled to their say in the matter.”

“True; but they surely won’t object.”

“Ah, but they do object. They both have been here and think Barras’ terms beyond all reason.”

“Have they anything else to propose?”

“Yes, they have two propositions. First, to have Daly write a play, which they think he will do for five hundred dol-

lars. Second, to use the Naiad Queen, which can be had for nothing.”

“Have you given up all hope of winning them over?”

“By no means; we will meet again to-morrow, and, though it is a matter of two to one, I think they will yield.”

The meeting took place and they did yield. Barras was sent for and the contract signed.

If at that time their eyes had been sharp enough, as Banquo says, “to look into the seeds of time and say which grain will grow and which will not,” they might have been fifty thousand dollars richer. A bold offer of ten thousand for the entire right to the piece would probably have been too great a temptation for Barras to resist; and the sixty thousand, in the shape of royalties which, in a few months, he scooped into his pocket, would have gone into their own. They did try it on afterwards, but it was too late. “The seeds of time” had already sprouted with all the agility of Jack’s beanstalk, and Barras laughed at their offer as he busied himself gathering in his royal harvest.

Experience, as we know, is not the

cheapest commodity in the market, yet fifty thousand dollars seems rather a steep price to pay for a little bit of it. However, the Crook's managers had learned one thing—if they were not before acquainted with it—how much sharper the hindsight of human nature is than its foresight.

Speaking of Barras and his royal harvest, here is a story which may have some amusement in it for the reader. While the Crook was at the height of its popularity, its author, who was then living at the St. Nicholas Hotel, was besieged day and night by speculators anxious to make their fortune by securing the right to play the piece in some city or cities where it had not as yet been produced. One of these fellows—probably with the idea of getting ahead of somebody else, or, maybe, having faith in the early-bird-and-worm theory—made his call at the hotel about sunrise and insisted upon the clerk having Barras hustled out of bed, saying that he must see him and on a matter of the greatest importance to that gentleman. Barras dressed himself and came down, but not in the best of humors. He was fond

of his bed—10 o'clock being his usual hour of leaving it—and the idea of having his morning nap broken in two had commenced to heat up his pot of wrath. By the time he reached the hotel parlor it was at the boiling-point, and without much ado he began to ladle it out on the head of his caller.

“Well, sir, what the d—l do you mean by hauling me out of bed at this hour? Is the hotel on fire?”

“I beg pardon, Mr. Barras; I was most anxious to see you and wanted to be sure of catching you in.”

“Catching me in? Catching me in bed, I suppose you mean. Well, now you have caught me there, what do you want?”

“I would like to purchase the right to play the Black Crook in some city, I am not particular which one.”

Now, Barras was something of a humorist, fond of his joke, and always able to fit one in wherever he saw a place for it. So, putting the lid on his wrath, he took from his pocket a paper which he pretended was a list of the various cities for which the right to play the Crook had been sold. He

ran his eye over it, up and down, mumbleing its supposed contents to himself.

“New York, Baltimore, Boston, St. Paul, Richmond, Chicago, Nashville, St. Louis, Minneapolis, Cleveland, New Orleans, Bangor, Savannah, Cincinnati, Louisville, San Francisco, Omaha, Pittsburgh, Mobile, Memphis, Troy.—Ahem ! I am very sorry, sir, but your chances are slim. Every city and town is—— Stop a moment, I am wrong ; here is one left which may answer your purpose, as you say you are not particular.”

A light glowed in the caller’s face as he eagerly asked :

“Where—what is it ?”

“Sitka.”

The caller pondered a moment on the character of Sitka’s population, which at that time consisted chiefly of bears and icebergs ; then the light in his face went out, and, picking up his hat, the caller went out, too.

But to proceed. Now that the managers had secured their piece, another difficulty stepped in the way of its production. We had played the Ravels the previous season to such big business, they were re-engaged

and we were now in the midst of this second engagement—a disastrous one—with six weeks of it yet to run. It was absolutely necessary that we have possession of the stage in order to make the intended alterations in it, or, rather, to replace it with an entirely new one. We asked the Ravels to consent to some arrangement which would end their engagement and give us the use of the stage. They were obstinate, however, in their desire to play out their engagement, and consequently their consent came high. But we had to have it. They demanded the sum of ten thousand dollars—and got it.

And now commenced the preparations, which, in their cost, were to exceed those of any spectacular play hitherto produced. Before the curtain rose on the Crook's first night, there had been an outlay of fifty-five thousand dollars. The bills and advertisements made the sum five thousand less; but this was an error, and the kind of one that managers are not apt to make. (I need not have mentioned that fact. The public are already aware—for Shakspere's fat knight has so assured them—that "this

world is given to lying," and are also aware that a manager is no exception when the time comes to blazon his bills with the cost of a play.) The real expense of the Crook—by reason of the tangled condition of Jarrett & Palmer's account of outlay on the other side of the water, with Wheatley's on this side—was not known on the opening night, nor, indeed, for some time after.

The fifty-five thousand was not long in coming back. In thirty-five performances—that is to say, five weeks including the five Saturday matinees—the Crook had taken in over eighty-seven thousand dollars ; the running expenses during that time being about thirty-one thousand five hundred, or a little over six thousand a week.

And now for a bit of inside history that bears indirectly, if not directly, on the fate of the Crook. Some months previous to its production, the elder Bennett (of the *Herald*) and Barnum had a quarrel, which originated in this way : During the war, and toward the close of it, the great showman's Museum was burned to the ground, and Bennett fixed a longing eye on the site as the most suitable one on which to erect,

for the *Herald's* accommodation, a big marble building that would be an ornament to the city and a monument to his individual pluck.

He opened negotiations with the owner, with the high hope of securing the ground and beginning his building at once. A serious obstacle blocked the way. Barnum's lease had still a year to run, and the wily showman would not consent to throw it up, except on such terms as Bennett thought most exorbitant. Perhaps they were. No doubt they were. The most auspicious time for a man to get the biggest price for anything is the time when the other fellow can't do without it. And this was Bennett's fix. He paid the price, but he had something up his sleeve for the showman which the latter didn't look for. "Now, Mr. Barnum, there's your money; but, with it, I want you to understand that hereafter no advertisement of yours can go into the *New York Herald* at any price."

This was a blow between the eyes for Barnum. The fire, though it had destroyed his Museum, had not burned up his love for humbug. He had already secured a building farther up Broadway,

where he intended to establish another home for his wooly horses and fish-tail mermaids. Hence, Bennett's ultimatum staggered him. None knew better than he the value of the *Herald* as an advertising medium, and to be shut out forever from the use of its columns would be a calamity he could not submit to ; nor would he, without a struggle. If he found that his struggle was vain and he must submit, then, he thought he saw a way to square accounts with Bennett by knocking him out with a sort of diplomatic sand-bag.

He made his struggle, but to no purpose. He claimed that a newspaper, like an inn, was for the accommodation of the public ; and that its proprietor could be compelled to publish any advertisement that was not morally objectionable or libelous. As both Bennett and the law refused to look at it in that light, the showman gathered his wits together, thought of his sand-bag, and started for his revenge.

This is the way he got it.

But, stop ; I am a little ahead of my story.

Some time before this quarrel, the managers of the various theatres and minstrel-

managers had formed a league for the purpose of fighting what they thought the unreasonable demands of the orchestra for more salary. These demands became too frequent and heavy to suit them, hence their league—which bore the somewhat grandiloquent title, “The Board of Associate Managers of New York”—came into existence. Its meetings were held in one of the rooms of the Metropolitan Hotel, and their average attendance was made up of, perhaps, eight or ten members. Barnum was one of the big guns of the Board, and his influence there was the sandbag he had in pickle for Bennett, and which he was now itching for an opportunity to use on the head of the unsuspecting Scotchman. The opportunity came. At the meeting following his quarrel he laid his complaint before the Board, declaring Bennett’s action unwarranted and unjust, and then moved that the managers, in a body, withdraw all their advertisements and printing from the *New York Herald*.

There was discussion, of course, and much of it. Barnum argued that the importance of the *Herald* was unduly magnified; and that the Board’s united action

would render the omission of the advertisement harmless. Wheatley, on the other hand, took a different view. He thought that Barnum's remedy for his complaint, though it might be satisfactory to that gentleman, was an unwholesome dose for those who were suffering from no such ailment. It savored too much of the fox in the fable, who, having had his tail cut off, tried to persuade the others of his tribe that a tail was really of no use to a fox, and that they all would look much handsomer without one.

Barnum, however, had everything his own way, and his motion was seconded and carried with but two dissenting votes—William Wheatley's and Lester Wallack's. Another motion was then made and carried. “All of our advertisements in the other papers, and all of our bills and posters, shall have the displayed headline: ‘This establishment does not advertise in the *New York Herald*’”—a line, by the way, often enough in the eye of the public to become a by-word, and to be used by every peanut-stand on the Bowery that could afford a bandbox-lid and a bit of charcoal.

And thus Barnum got his revenge. It

now remained to be seen who would have to pay for it. Wheatley took the matter philosophically, although his mind was somewhat exercised as to the attitude the *Herald* would take regarding the Crook. Either of two things might be looked for—silence or abuse. He preferred the latter, and got it.

As to the motive behind Bennett's attacks, I have my own surmises. He was too shrewd a newspaper man, and too well equipped with knowledge of human nature, not to know that a column of the *Herald*'s abuse would be worth more to a manager's exchequer than a column of its praise, provided the abuse be of the right sort. He was, no doubt, aware of all that took place at the meeting of the Board of Managers in relation to the withdrawal of their advertising, and, possibly, had his information from Wheatley himself. He knew the stubborn stand the latter took in opposition to Barnum's motion, and also knew that he stood almost alone in his loyalty to the *Herald*. Hence I think that good-will, and not enmity, was at the bottom of his action. I imagine the astute old Scotchman soliloquizing : "This man,

Wheatley, is a good fellow, and a sensible one ; but I can't consistently puff his piece. I can, however, and will, do something which may benefit him more. I will give him and his play a semi-weekly column of gold-edged abuse."

Whether my imagination be right or wrong, I cannot say; but I can say that the abuse arrived on time. From the following extracts the reader can judge whether the edges of it were of gold or only pinchbeck :—

“Nothing in any other Christian country, or in modern times, has approached the indecent and demoralizing exhibition at Wheatley's Theatre in this city. The Model Artists are more respectable and less disgusting, because they are surrounded with a sort of mystery—something like a veil of secrecy—which women do not look behind and which men slip in stealthily to see. But the almost nude females at Wheatley's are brought out boldly before the public gaze. * * *

“Of course, Wheatley is making money. It is just such a spectacle as will make an excitement and draw those crowds of loose characters and people with morbid, pru-

rient tastes, which may be found in all large cities. Then there are a great many people who come in from the surrounding country to get a glimpse of this new thing. We must not, therefore, give credit to our citizens for being the only supporters of the shocking performance. It gets a great deal of support from the countrymen who come to town expressly to see the 'elephant.' * * *

"Nothing, as we said, has been witnessed in a theatre in Modern times so indecent as this spectacle. We can imagine there might have been in Sodom and Gomorrah such another place and scene, such a theatre and spectacle on the Broadway of those doomed cities just before fire and brimstone rained down upon them and they were buried in the ruins.

"There was, too, we believe, similar places and scenes in Pompeii just as that city was buried beneath the eruption of Vesuvius. We may be saved, perhaps, from a like fate on account of the many good people there are in New York. * * * But that does not do away with the guilt of tolerating or permitting such an exhibition to exist as that at Wheatley's. Our

respectable citizens should cry it down, and the police should arrest all engaged in such a violation of public decency and morality. * * *

“Let all husbands and parents and guardians who value the morals of their wives, their daughters, and their wards, bear a watchful eye on their charges, and keep them from out the walls of Niblo’s Garden during the reign of the Black Crook. * * *

“If any of the *Herald’s* readers, in spite of its warnings and advice, are determined to gaze on the indecent and dazzling brilliancy of the Black Crook, they should provide themselves with a piece of smoked glass.”

Another and a very potent element in the making up of the Crook’s success was the war waged against it by a portion of the New York Pulpit. The most influential of these warriors—by “influential” I mean in his unconscious and unintentional aid to the Crook—was the Rev. Dr. Charles B. Smyth. He planted his batteries at the Cooper Institute, and on Sunday, November 18th, opened his fire with a red-hot shot at the fair breastworks of the Crook. He took for his text :

“THE NUISANCES OF NEW YORK,
PARTICULARLY
THE NAKED TRUTH.”

This was not from the Bible, but the reverend gentleman thought it had more powder in it and would make more noise than any Biblical one. Perhaps he was right in this, but he was wrong if he supposed that New York sinners would rather hear “the Naked Truth” than see it. However, the Institute was well filled, and the sermon—if sermon it could be called—seemed to please his hearers. And not them alone. When it appeared in the *Herald* of next morning the whole city was delighted with it, and none had more cause for delight than the managers of the Black Crook.

This choice bit of “the Naked Truth” will show why.

“But our chief concern to-day is with the dancing theatrical representations, and of a particular establishment which has lately attracted a great deal of attention. I know not what may have been the motive that impelled the gentlemen, to whom it belongs, to get up its sights.

Who can tell but their love of human nature in general is such that, from the most generous impulses, they have gotten up an expensive and dazzling entertainment purely for the purpose of lightening the cares of life of the busy and careworn by giving the latter an opportunity, on as low terms, almost, as the most extravagant places of amusement, of seeing by gas-light and hell-fire light, and in the bronzed light of His Satanic Majesty's countenance, and in the red glare of the recording demon, the beautiful countenances, regular busts, trunks and limbs chiseled out from head to foot by Nature's own hand with an exquisiteness of perfection far surpassing any that the finest art of man has ever wrought in Parian marble, with charms more bewitching and attitudes of softness and luxury most fascinating. * * * Poor, dear, darling, charming, enchanting creatures ; who could help loving them ? ”

There may have been some brimstone in all this, but scarcely of the sort to scare the sight-loving theatre-goer and frighten him away from Niblo's. If the average New Yorker has any wholesome fear of

hell-fire—which some people doubt—it must be poked under his nose in a very different manner. His curiosity is vigorous and easily aroused, and when it is he takes the first opportunity to put it to sleep again, and all the brimstone that this world contains, or the other either, can't stop him. Now, among the crowd that listened to the Reverend Mr. Smyth's discourse, I will venture to say there were few, if any, whose curiosity was not wide awake, and who did not make an inward resolve to look at once on the wickedness of the Crook, or if they had already been guilty of that crime, to double it up and take another look.

Unfortunately for the Crook, the reverend gentleman's bombardment at the Institute met with an untimely end. His first broadside displeased the trustees, who spiked his guns, and in a summary manner: “Mr. Smyth, we are no judge of powder, and yours may be all that you think it is. But we *do* know brimstone when we smell it, and the fragrance of yours is not orthodox enough to suit the noses of the trustees. You will therefore remove your batteries and fire your brimstone from other

quarters whose nostrils are more ignorant or less particular."

And thus the Crook lost one of its props; but its superstructure now was so strongly underpinned by popular support, the loss of one prop was of little consequence.

The following announce bill of the opening night shows both the outlay on the Crook and the lay-out it had in store for the eyes of its patrons.

NIBLO'S GARDEN.

LESSEE AND MANAGER, WILLIAM WHEATLEY.
Doors open at 7. Begins at 7½.

OPENING OF THE REGULAR SEASON.

Monday, September 10th, 1866, and every evening, and Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock, will be presented an Original and Grand Magical Spectacular Drama in 4 acts, by C. M. BARRAS, Esq., entitled,

THE BLACK CROOK,

the sole right of which production has been purchased by Mr. Wheatley, for New York and its vicinity. Mr. Wheatley is likewise happy in having entered into arrangements with Messrs. Jarrett & Palmer for the introduction of their

GREAT PARISIENNE BALLET TROUPE,
under the direction of the famed Maitre de Ballet, SIGNOR
DAVID COSTA (from the Grand Opera, Paris).

PREMIER DANSEURS ASSOLUTE.

MLLE. MARIE BONFANTI, from the Grand Opera, Paris, and
Covent Garden Theatre, London.

MLLE. RITA SANGALI, from the Grand Opera, Berlin, and
Her Majesty's Theatre, London.

Their first appearance in America.

FIRST PREMIER AND SOLOIST.

MLLE. BETTY REGAL, from the Grand Opera, Paris.
Her first appearance in America.

SECOND PREMIERS AND SOLOISTS.

Mlle. Louise Mazzeri,	Mlle. Giovanna Mazzeri,
" Giuseppi,	" Amele Zuccoli,
" Lusardi,	" Eugenie Zuccoli,
" Marie Duclos,	" Helene Duclos,

from Berlin, Milan, Paris, and London.

CORYPHEES.

Mlle. E. Regal,	Mlle. Gabrielle,
" Amande,	" Irban,
" Nathalie,	" Marie,
" Doche,	" Helene,
" Lacroix,	" Delval,
" Portois,	" Bertha,
" Chereri,	" L. Portois,
" Artois,	" Centbertrand.
" Elise,	" H. Delval,
" Duval,	" Paulina,

from Paris, London, and Berlin.

Their first appearance in America,

and

FIFTY AUXILIARY LADIES

selected from the principal theatres of London, and America.

THE LEADING ROLES

on this most

RESPLendent, GRAND, AND COSTLY PRODUCTION

ever presented on this Continent will be sustained by the following artistes, comprising many well-known names and new candidates for public favor.

Misses Annie Kemp (Prima donna Contralto, from Covent Garden, London; her first appearance in America in six years). Mary Wells, Rose Morton (from Royal Lyceum Theatre, London; her first appearance in America). Milly Cavendish (from Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London; her first appearance in America). Messrs. George C. Boniface (first appearance in many years). J. G. Burnett, H. C. Morton (first appearance). George Atkins (from Sadler's Wells Theatre, London; first appearance in America). The well-known Pantomimist, Hernandez Foster (his first appearance at this theatre). J. W. Blaisdell, E. B. Holmes, F. Barry, Rendle, &c., &c.

The Drama produced under the immediate direction of **W. WHEATLEY.**

The gorgeous and brilliant new scenery by those eminent masters of Scenic Art, **MESSRS. RICHARD MARSTON** (of the Covent Garden, London), **J. E. HAYES**, **R. SMITH**, **B. A. STRONG**, **L. F. SERVER**, and **WALACK**.

THE DAZZLING TRANSFORMATION SCENE,
painted by

THE BROTHERS BREW,
of London, for E. M. Smith, Esq., of Astley's Theatre, London,
and purchased by Messrs. Jarrett & Palmer, at a cost of
FIFTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS.

ESPECIAL NEW MUSIC,
composed by Thomas E. Baker, by courtesy of Leonard Grover,
Esq., and produced under the baton of H. G. Dodworth.

ENTIRELY NEW AND SUPERB COSTUMES,
by M. Philipe.

The GLITTERING AND ENTIRELY NEW ARMORS and BALLET
PARAPHERNALIA, prepared expressly in Paris, by Granger.

ENTIRELY NEW PROPERTIES AND APPOINTMENTS,
by S. Wallis.

THE NEW STAGE AND MACHINERY,
combining the greatest improvements of Europe and America,
making it equal, if not superior to any in the world, and con-
structed at a cost of over ten thousand dollars, by those skillful
machinists, John Froude, of Her Majesty's Theatre, London,
and Benson Sherwood of this establishment.

THE COMPLETE GAS CONTRIVANCES,
by C. Murray. The Calcium Lights, &c., for the Transformation
Scene, by Charles Seward, of London (engaged expressly for
the occasion).

The whole involving an outlay of

FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS.

Admission, 75 cents. Secured seats in Dress Circle, \$1.00.
Reserved seats in Parquet and Parquet Circle, \$1.50. Family Circle
(entrance on Crosby Street), 50 cents. Private Boxes, \$8 and \$10.

Seats secured six days in advance.

The nightly expenses exceeded one
thousand dollars, the weekly salaries of the
Ballet alone—the European part of it—
being one thousand and seventy-five dol-
lars in gold, then quoted at 150. The
piece had a continuous run of nearly six-
teen months, and yielded a profit of about

three hundred thousand dollars to Wheatley, an equal sum to Jarrett & Palmer, and sixty thousand dollars to Barras. The speculators, too, had a profitable finger in the Crook's pie. Rullman, the king of their clan, told me he made about thirty thousand dollars ; and doubtless there was none of them who didn't make enough to clothe his back with comfort and his stomach with beer and pretzels for the remainder of his days.

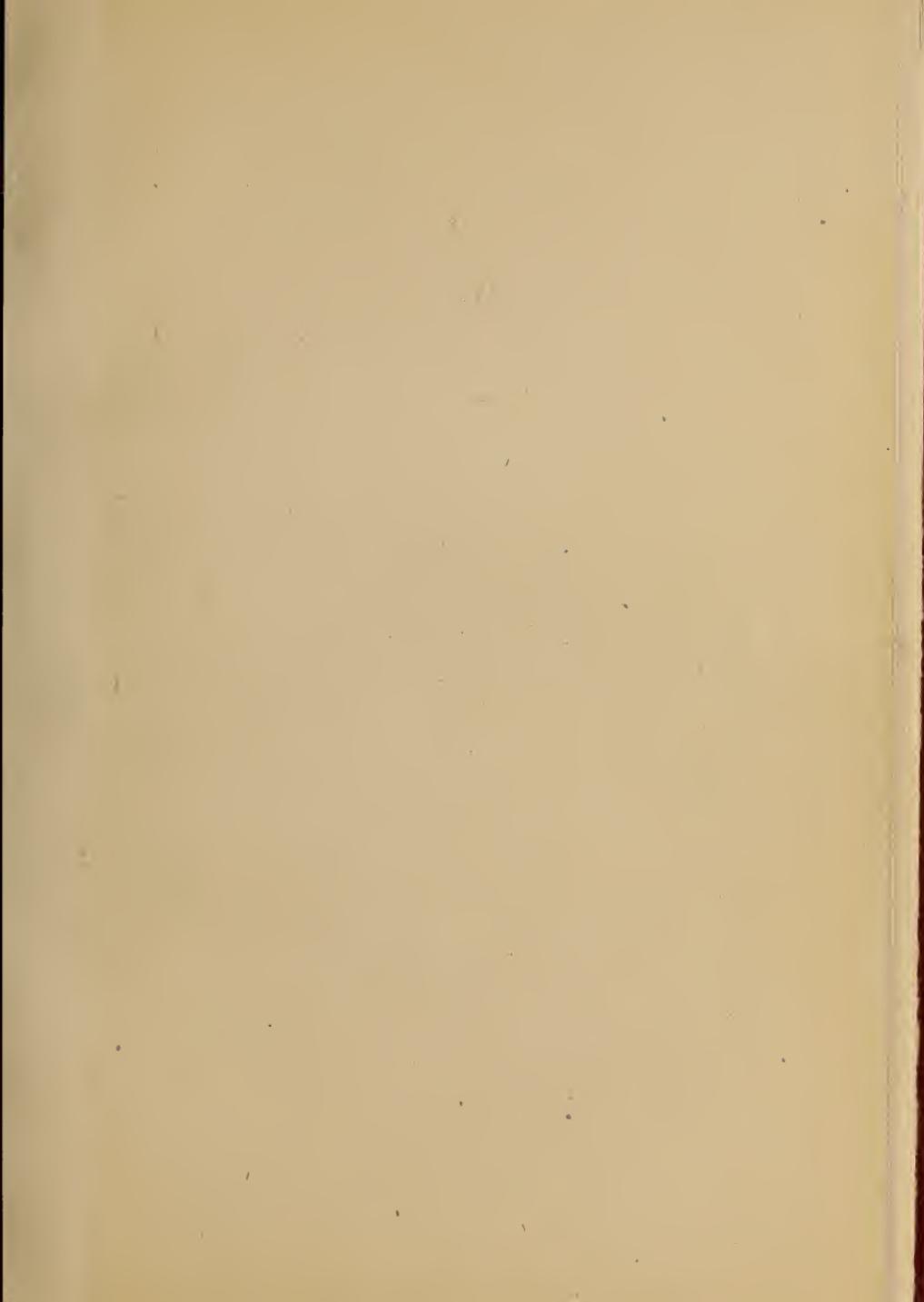
I have said nothing of the literary merits of the Crook, for the best of reasons—it had none. This, however, is no serious fault. Elegant writing, with its daintily picked words and smooth-flowing sentences, is all well enough in its place ; but that place is not in the drama of this prosy, money-grabbing age. The play-goer doesn't relish it. What he wants is something to please his eye and tickle his ear—something to strangle his cares and cut the throat of his troubles—something to make him laugh and forget he has a note to pay to-morrow, with no money to meet it. This is what he is after, and shrewd managers will show their shrewdness by accommodating him.

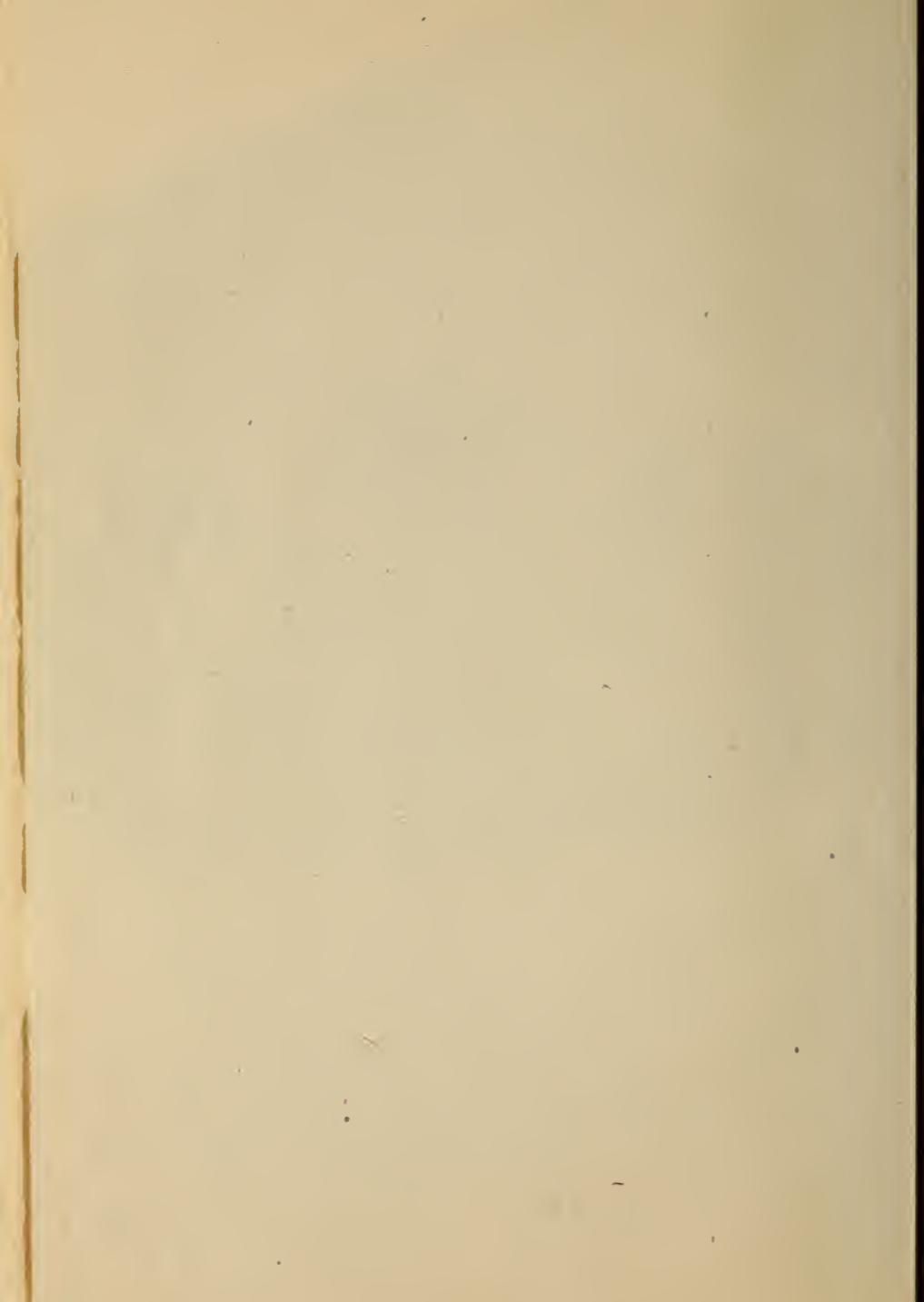


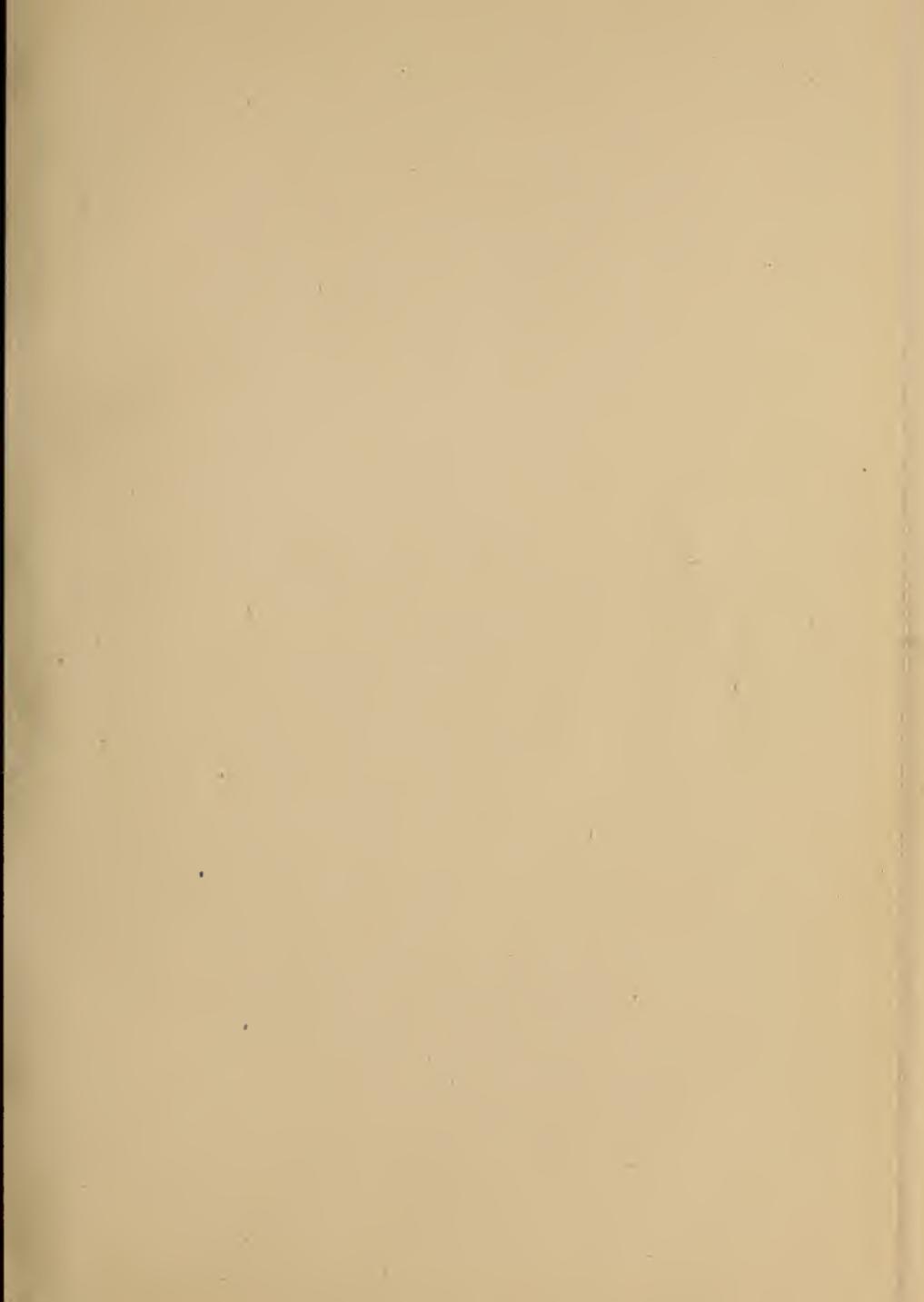
THE CROOK'S CRADLE.

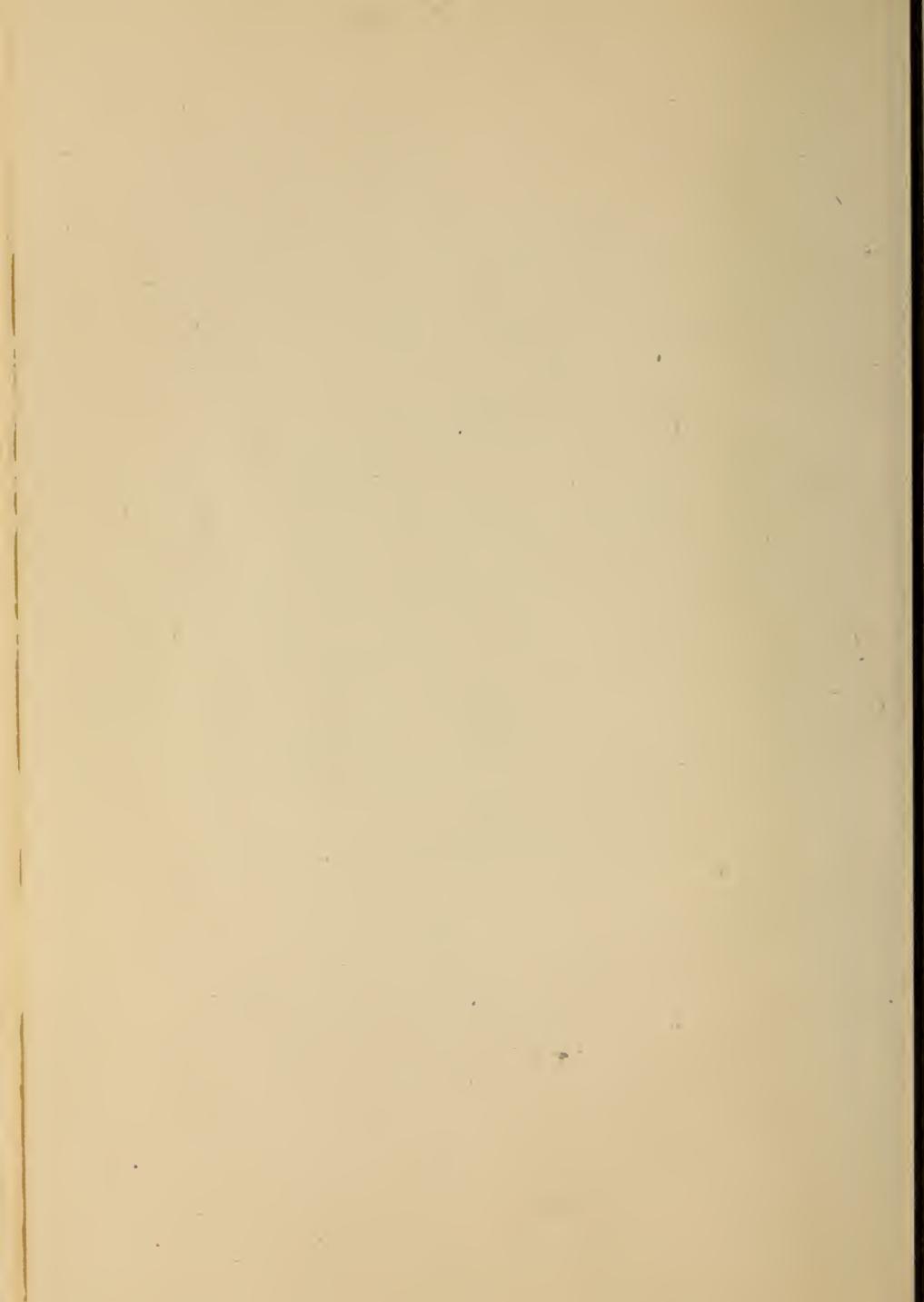
NIBLO'S GARDEN IN 1828.

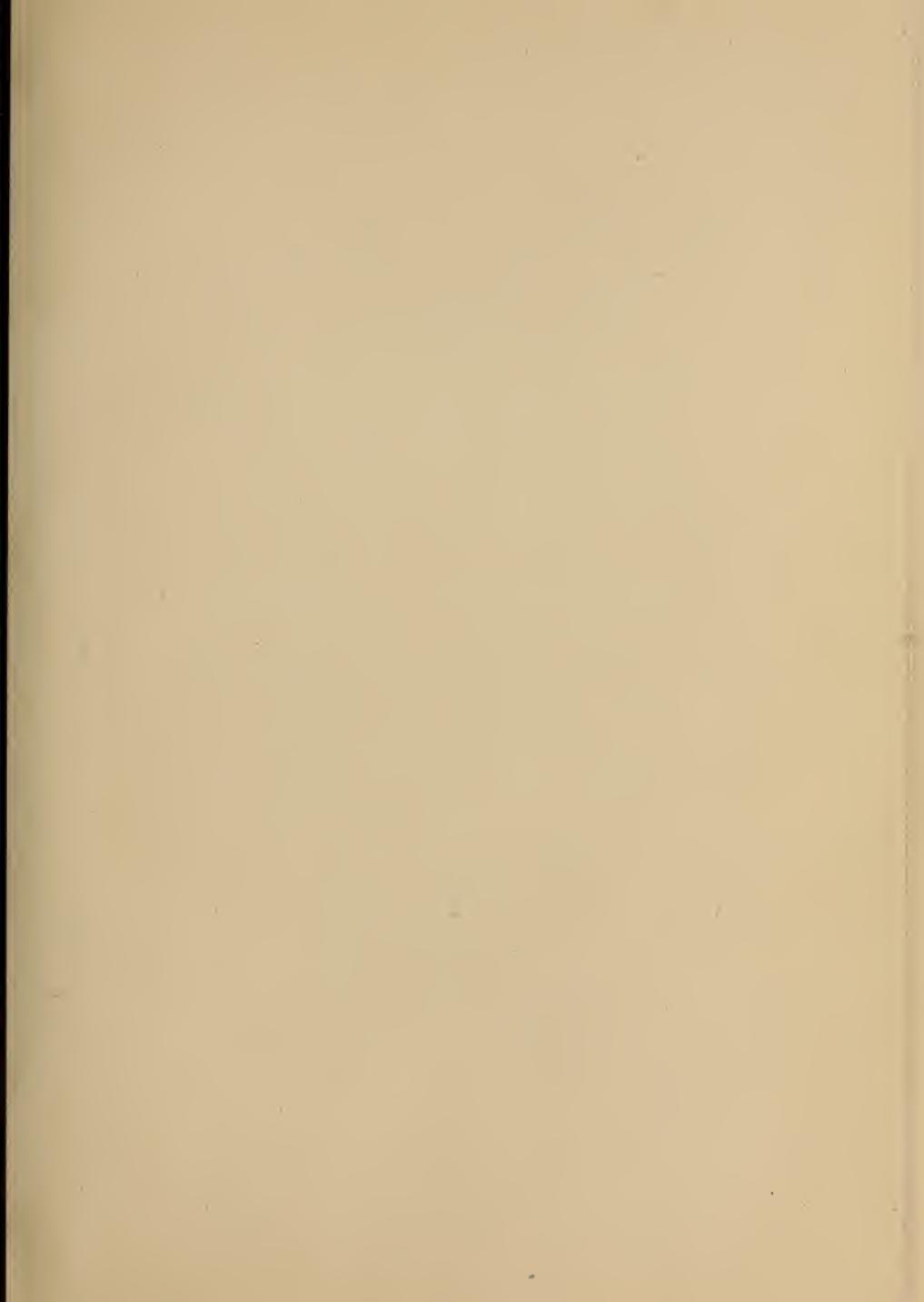
From the New York Clipper.

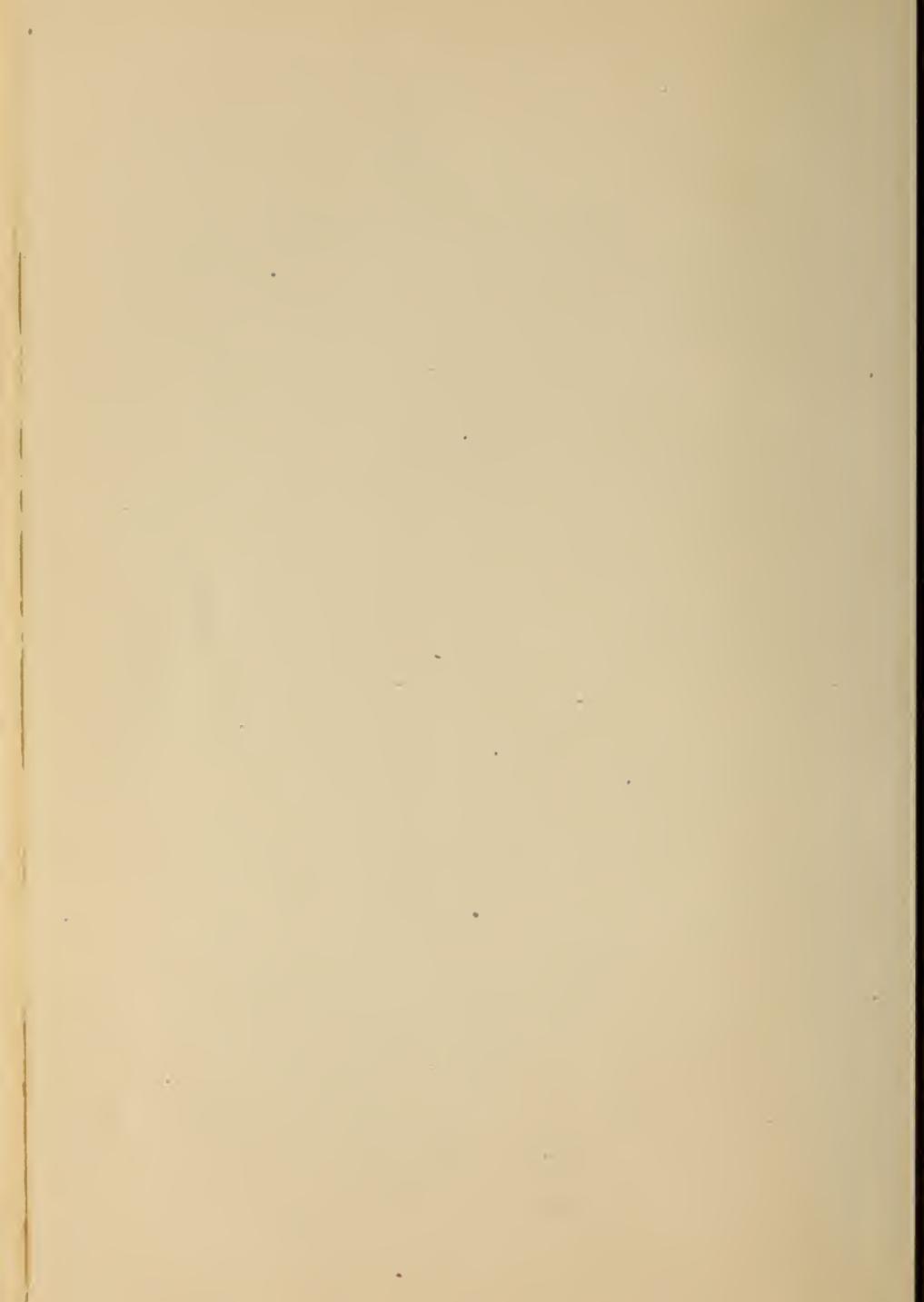


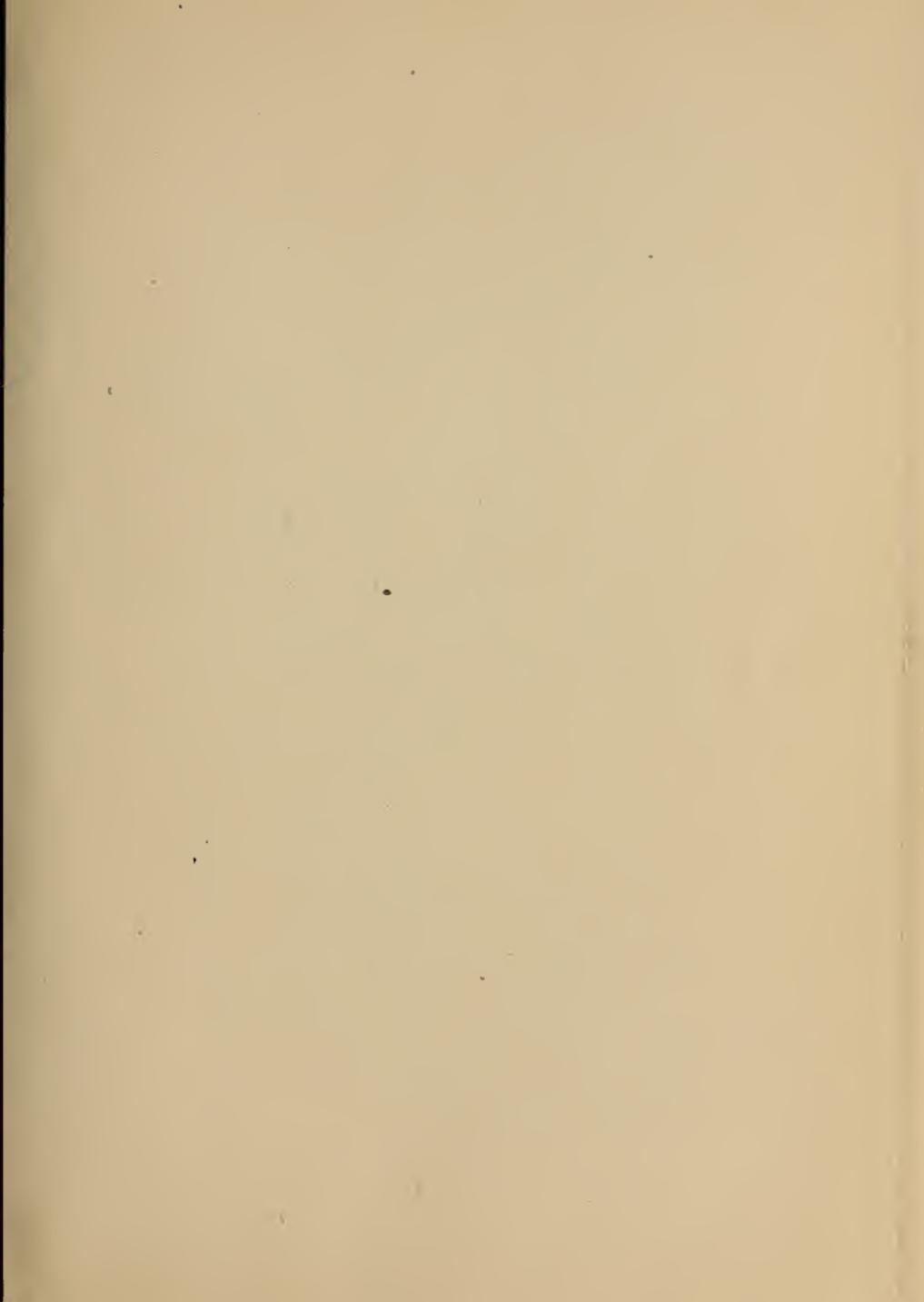


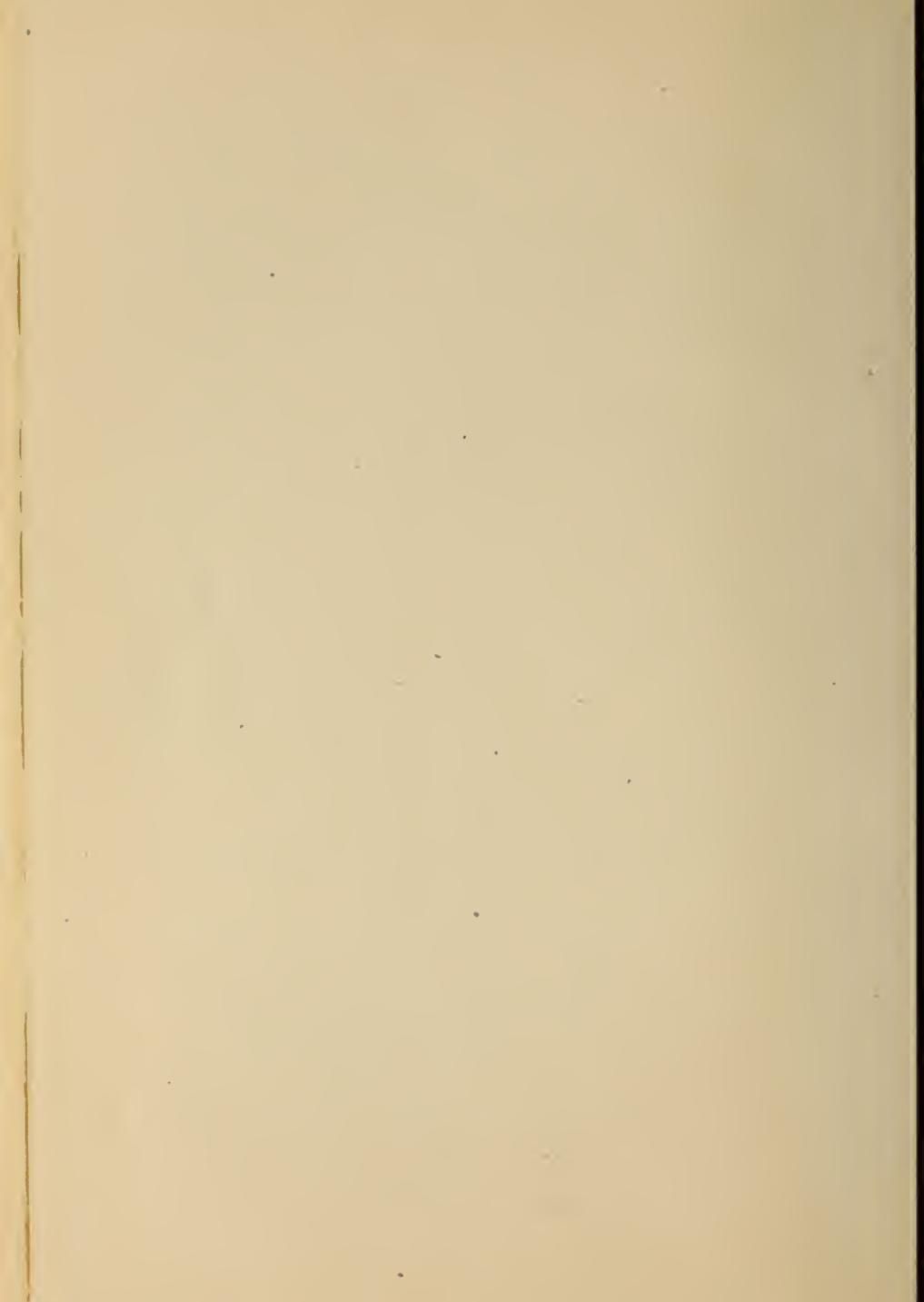


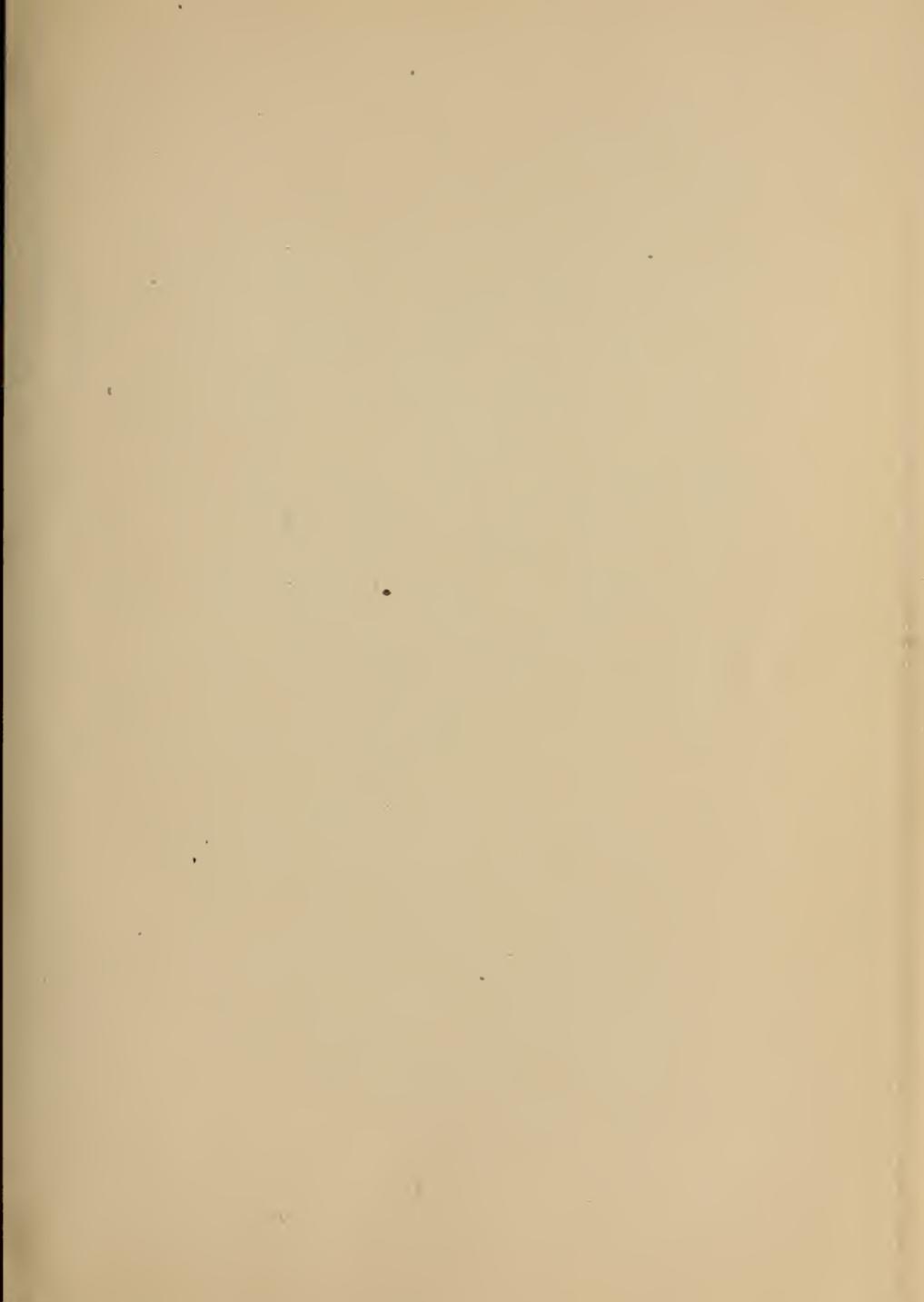


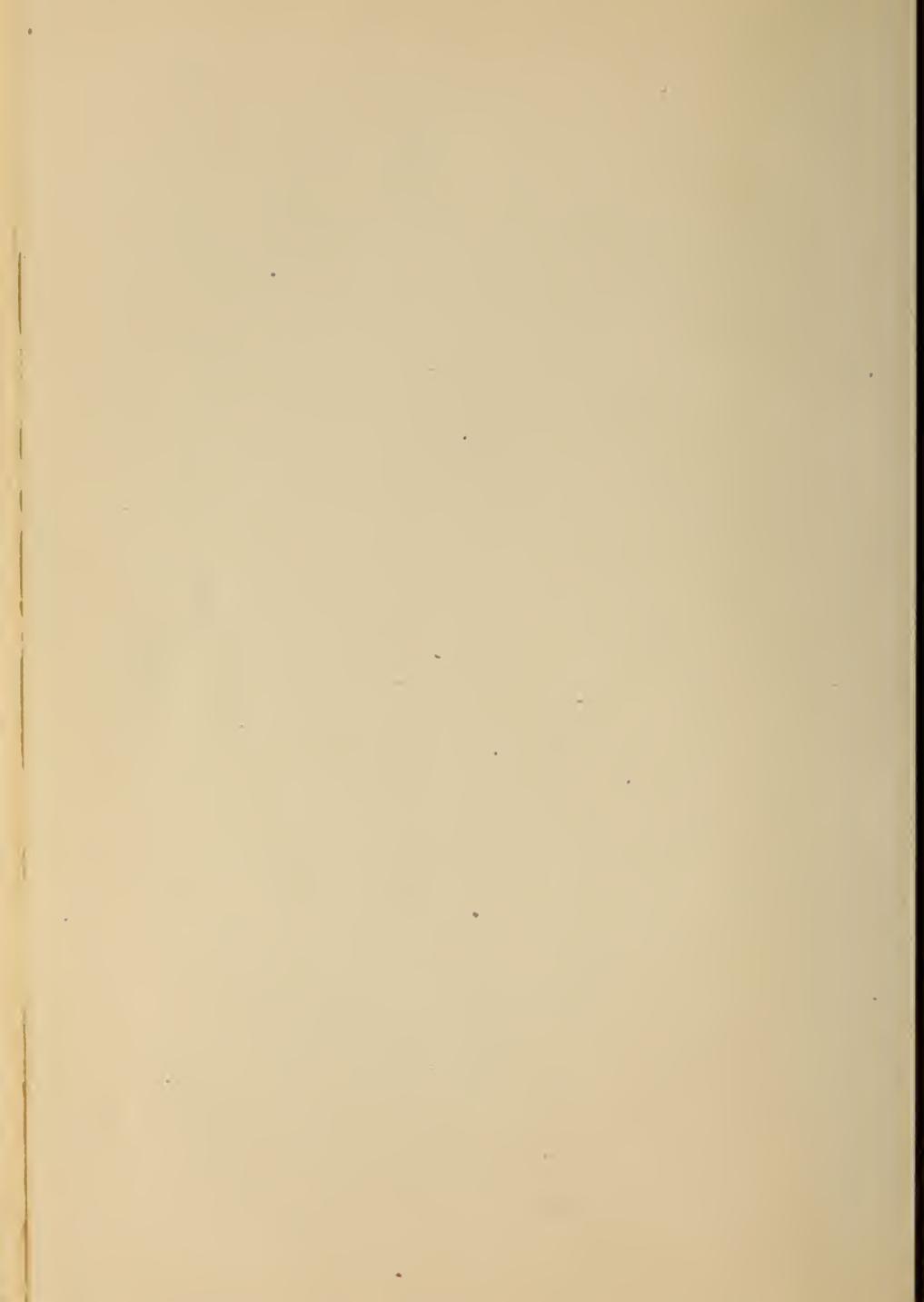


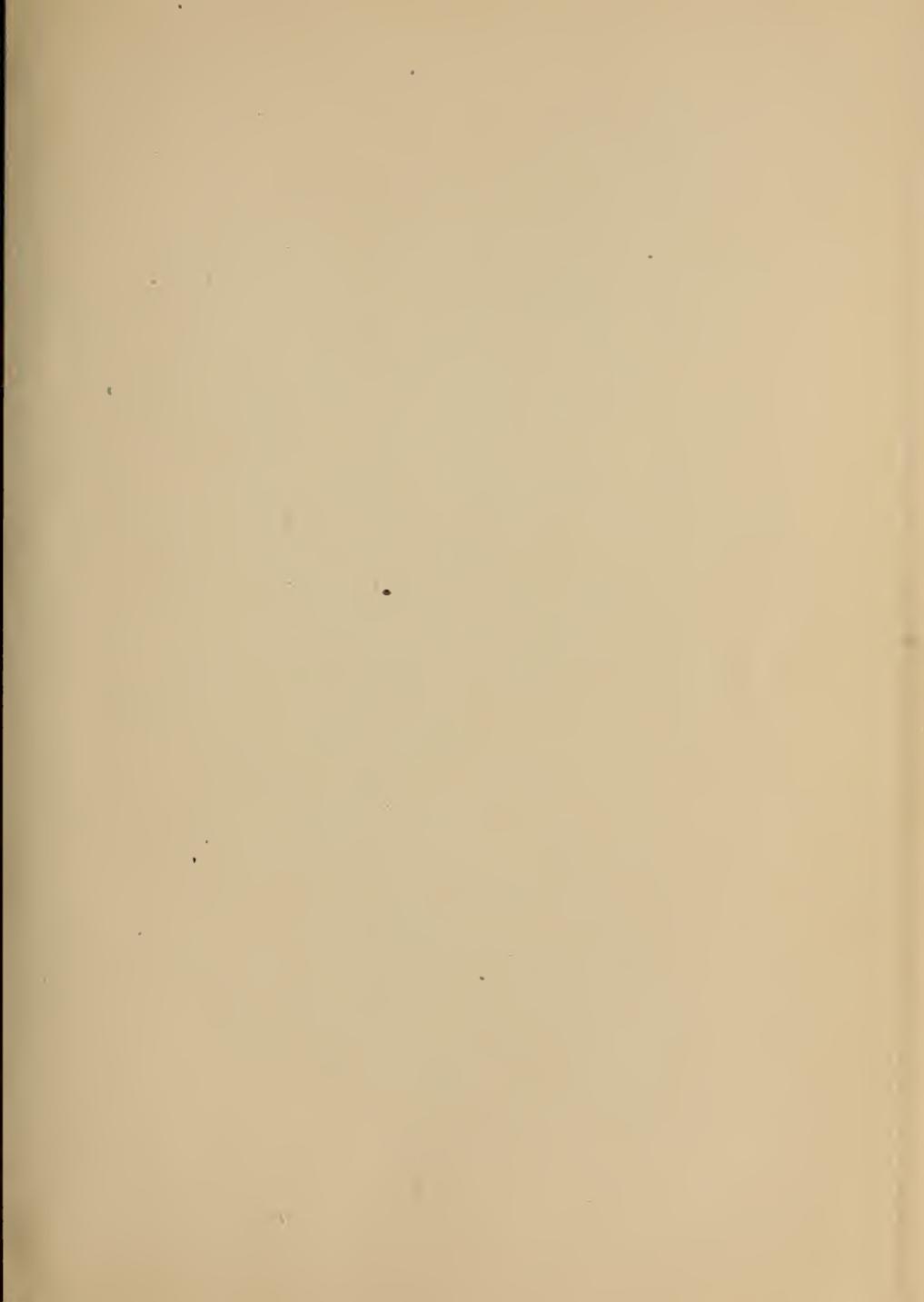


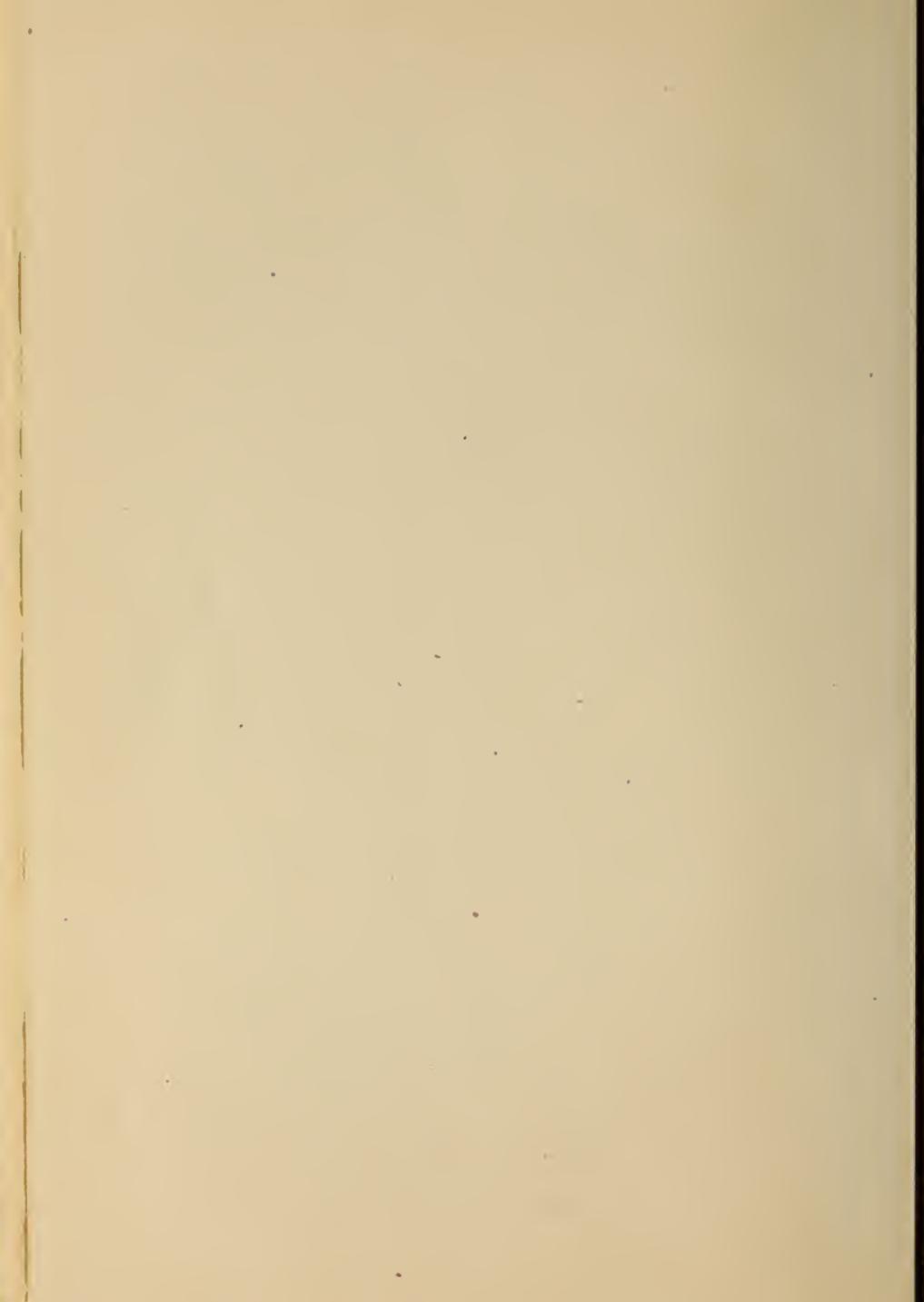


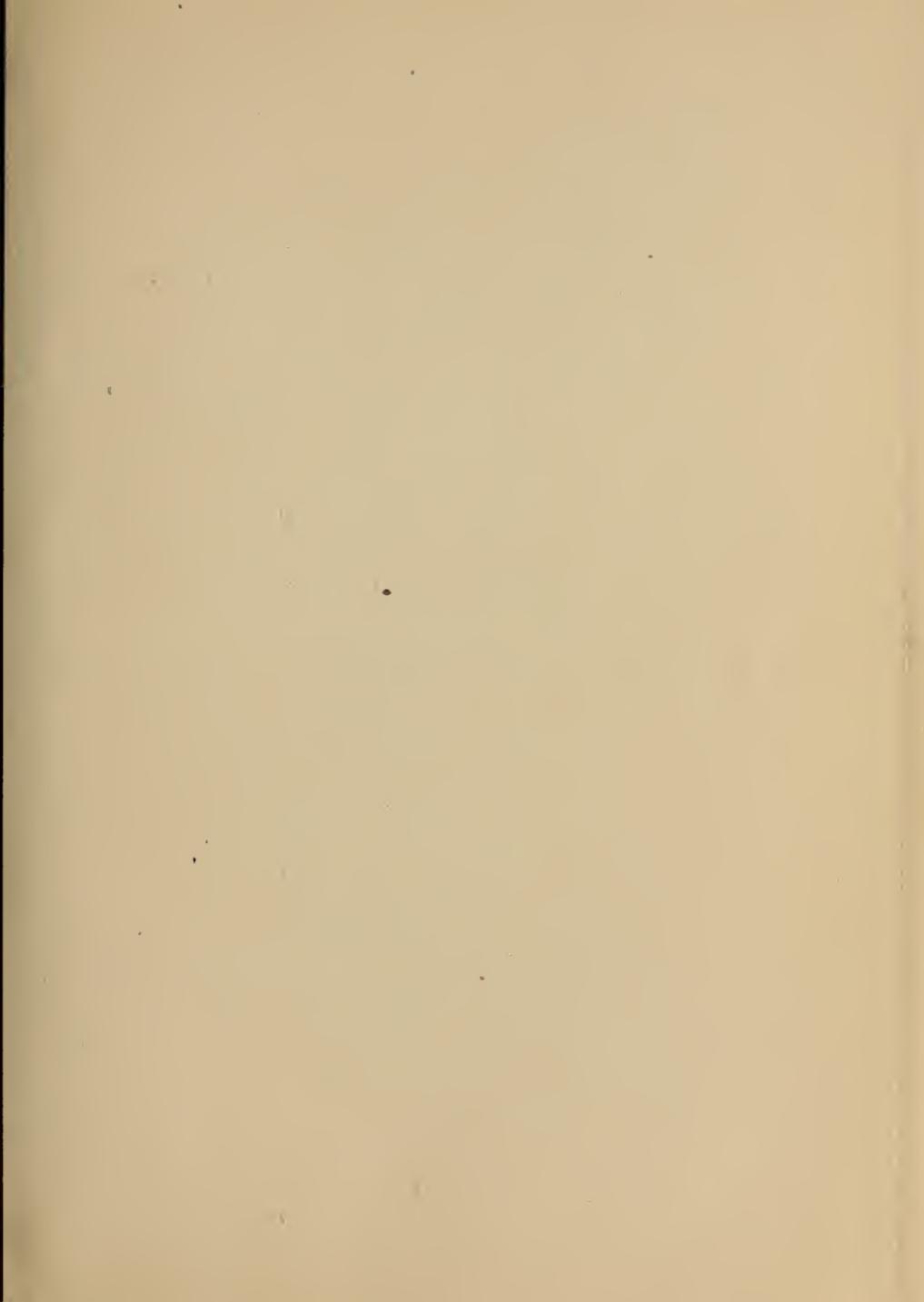


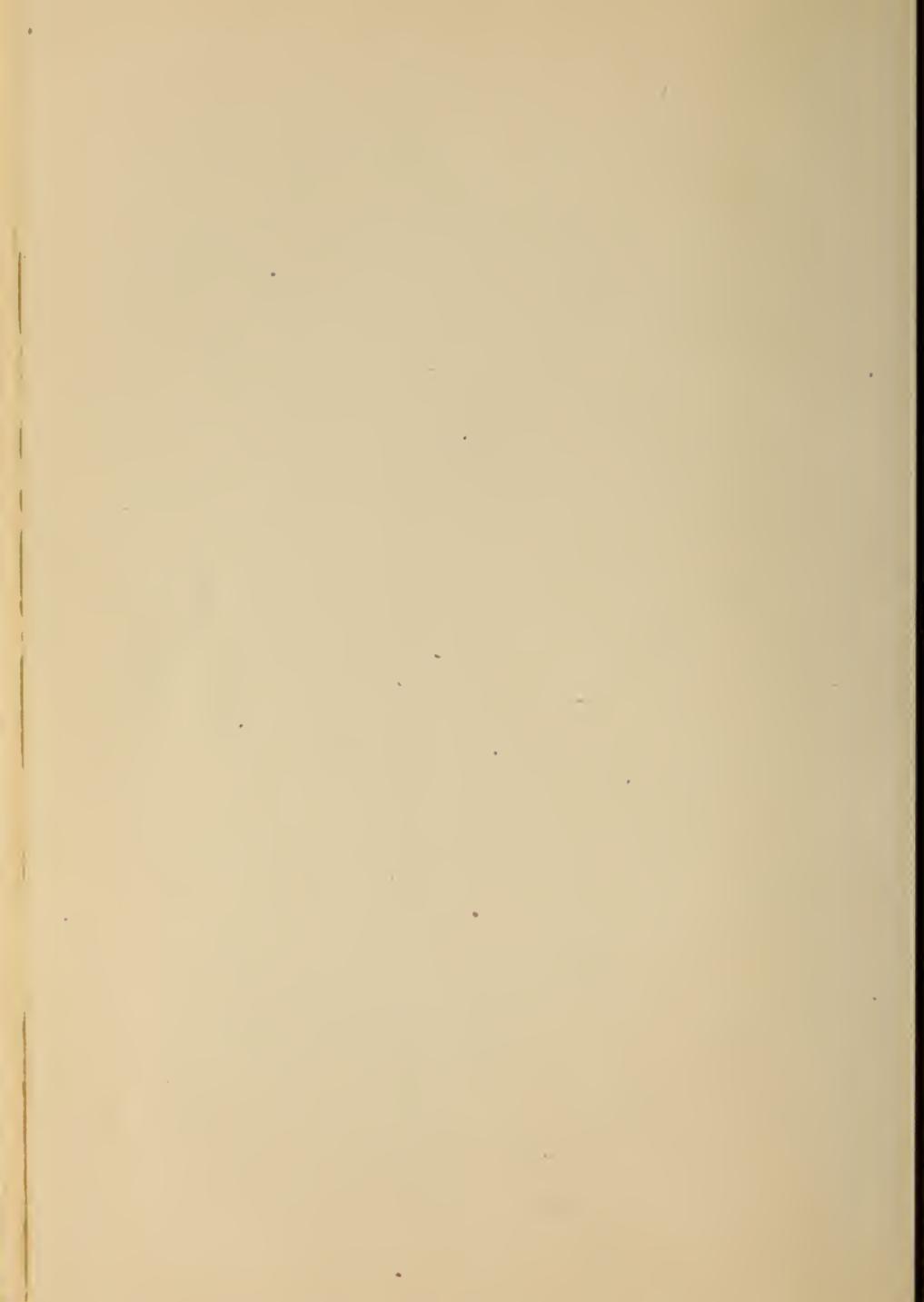


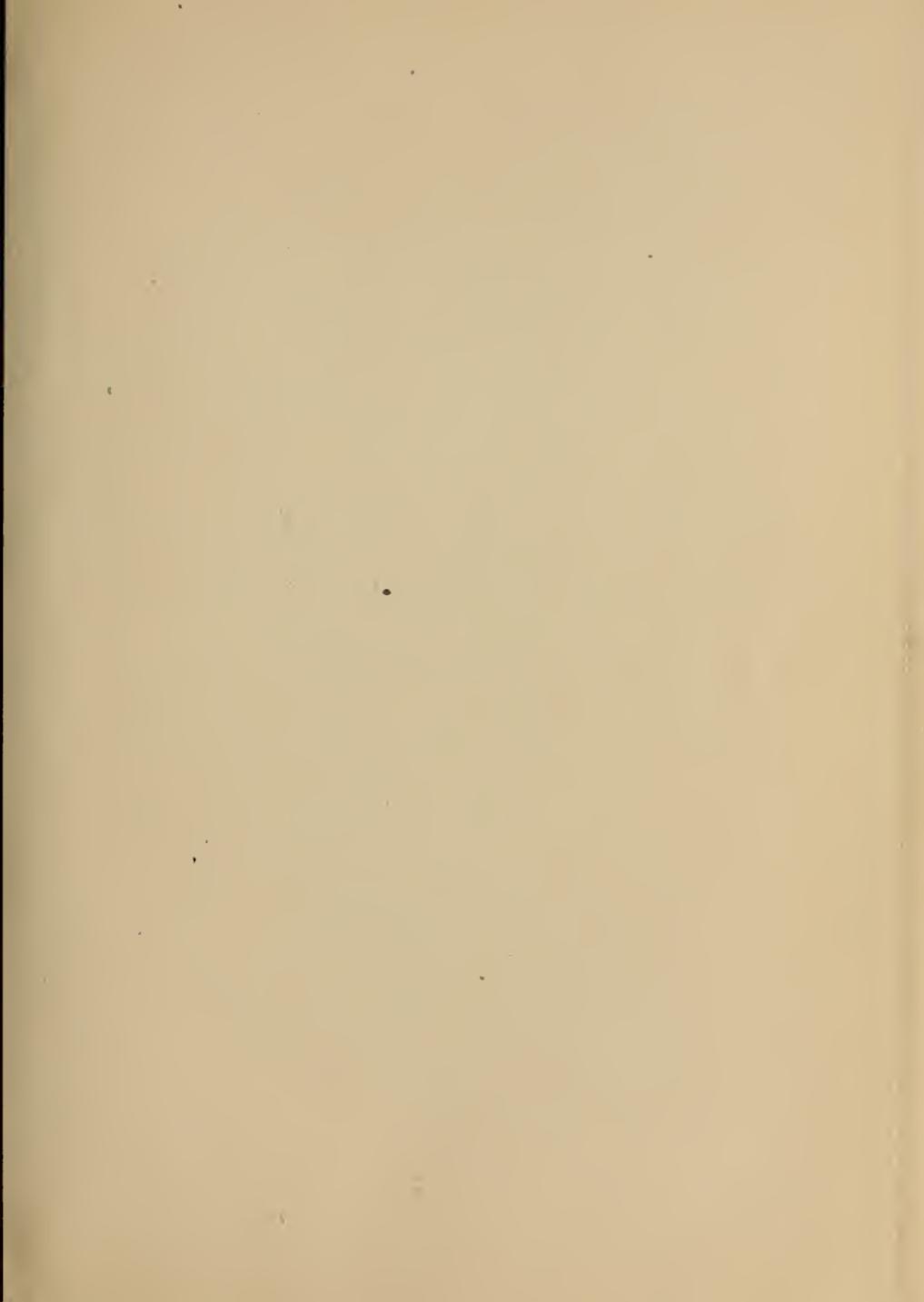


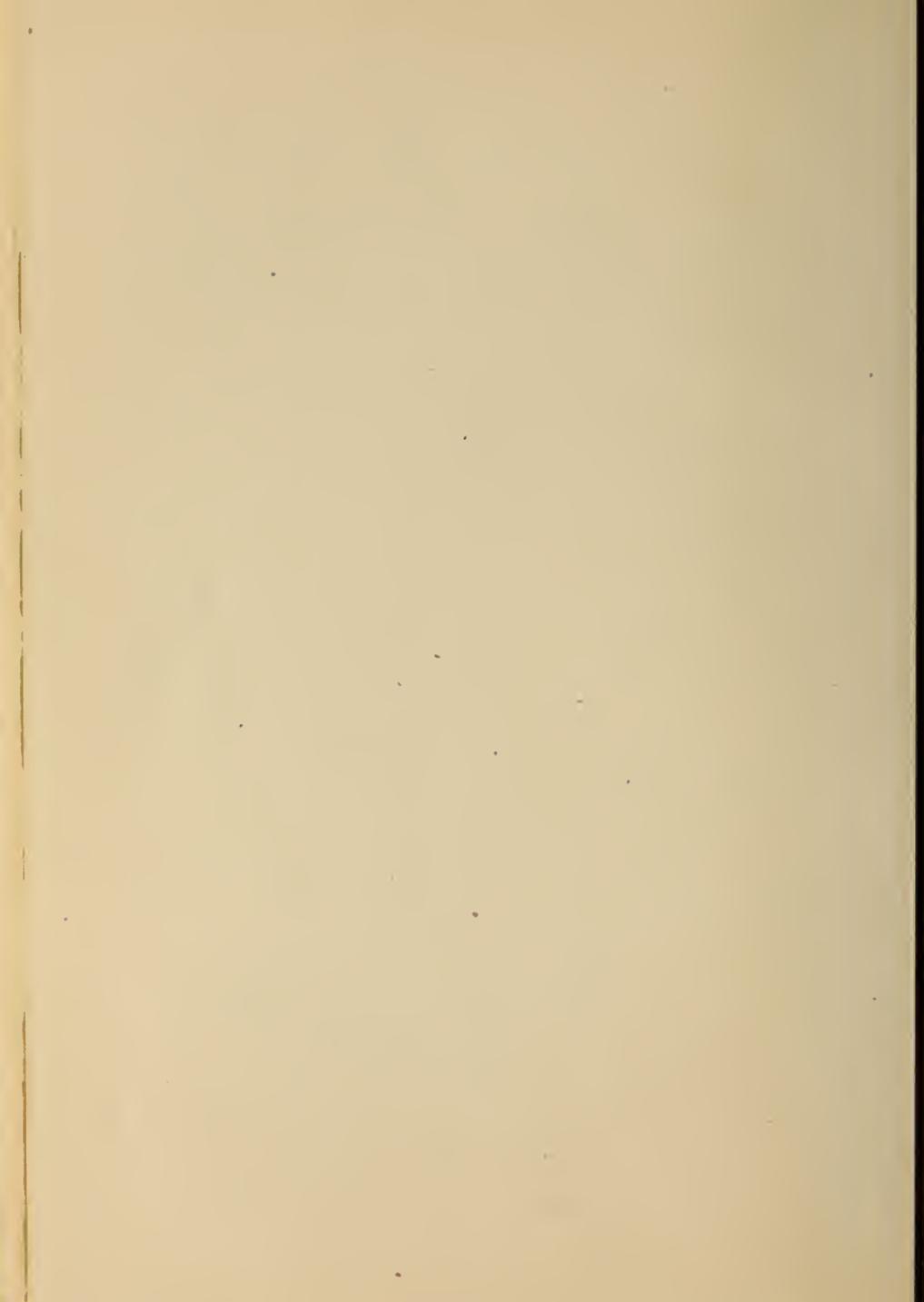


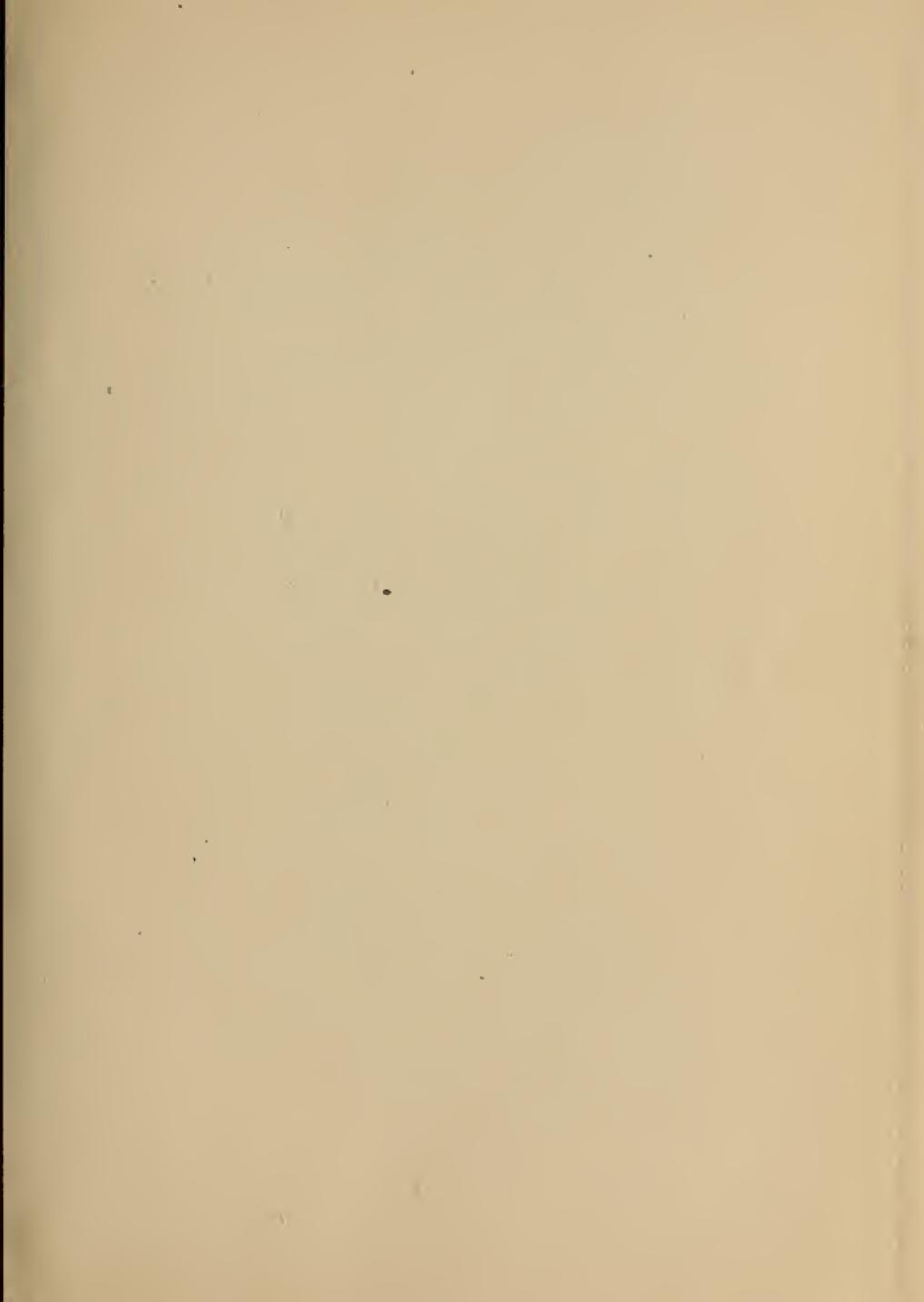


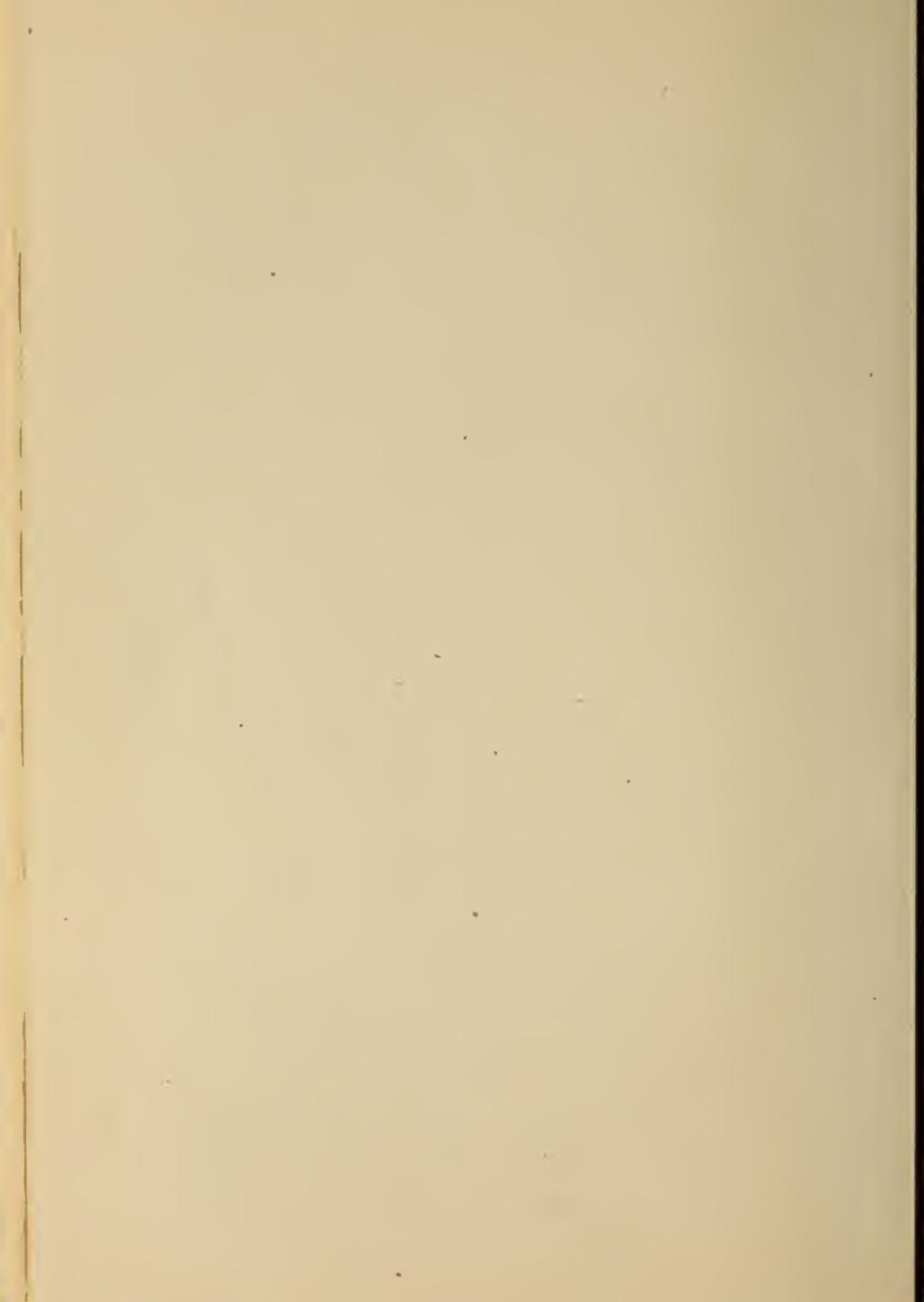


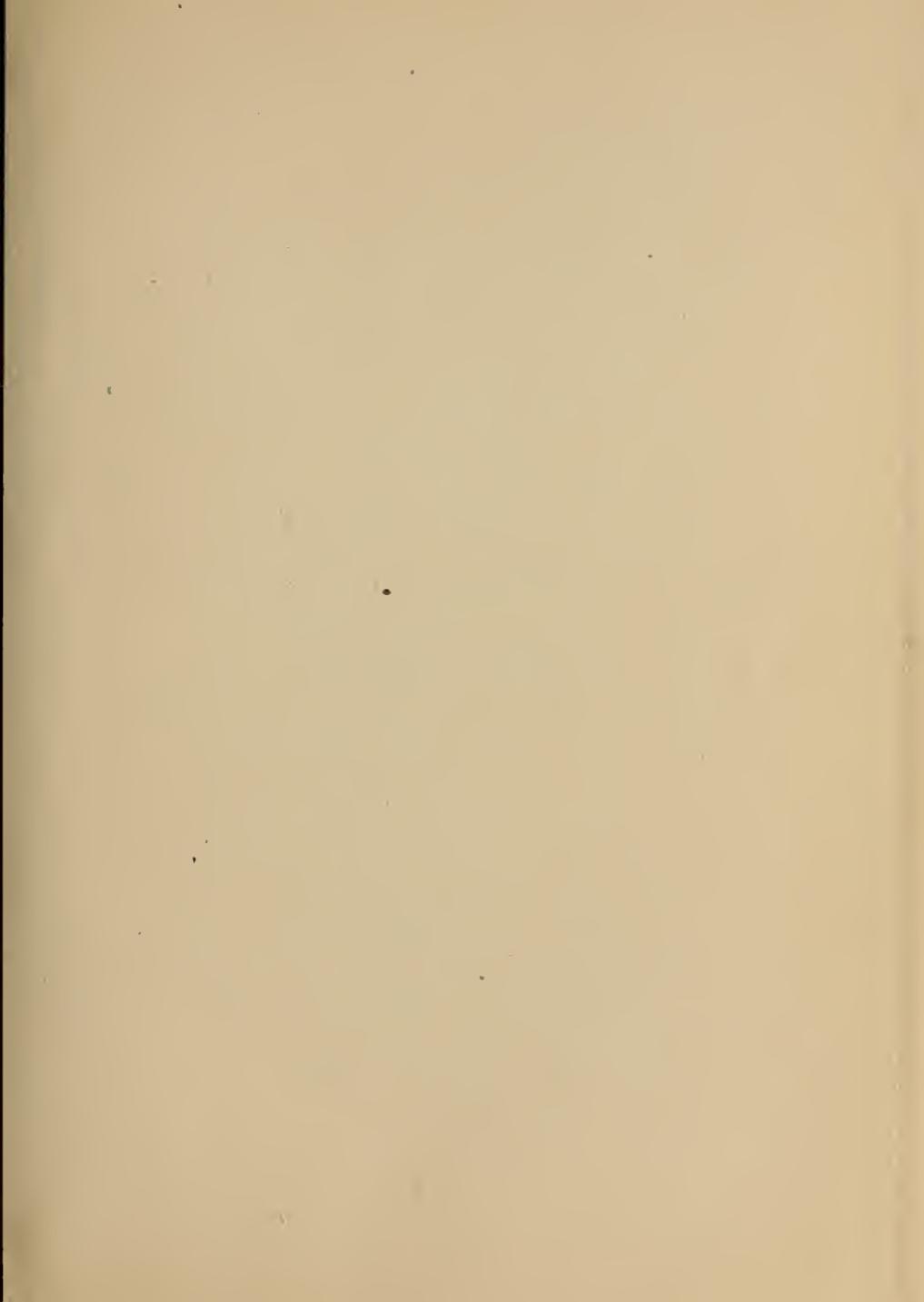


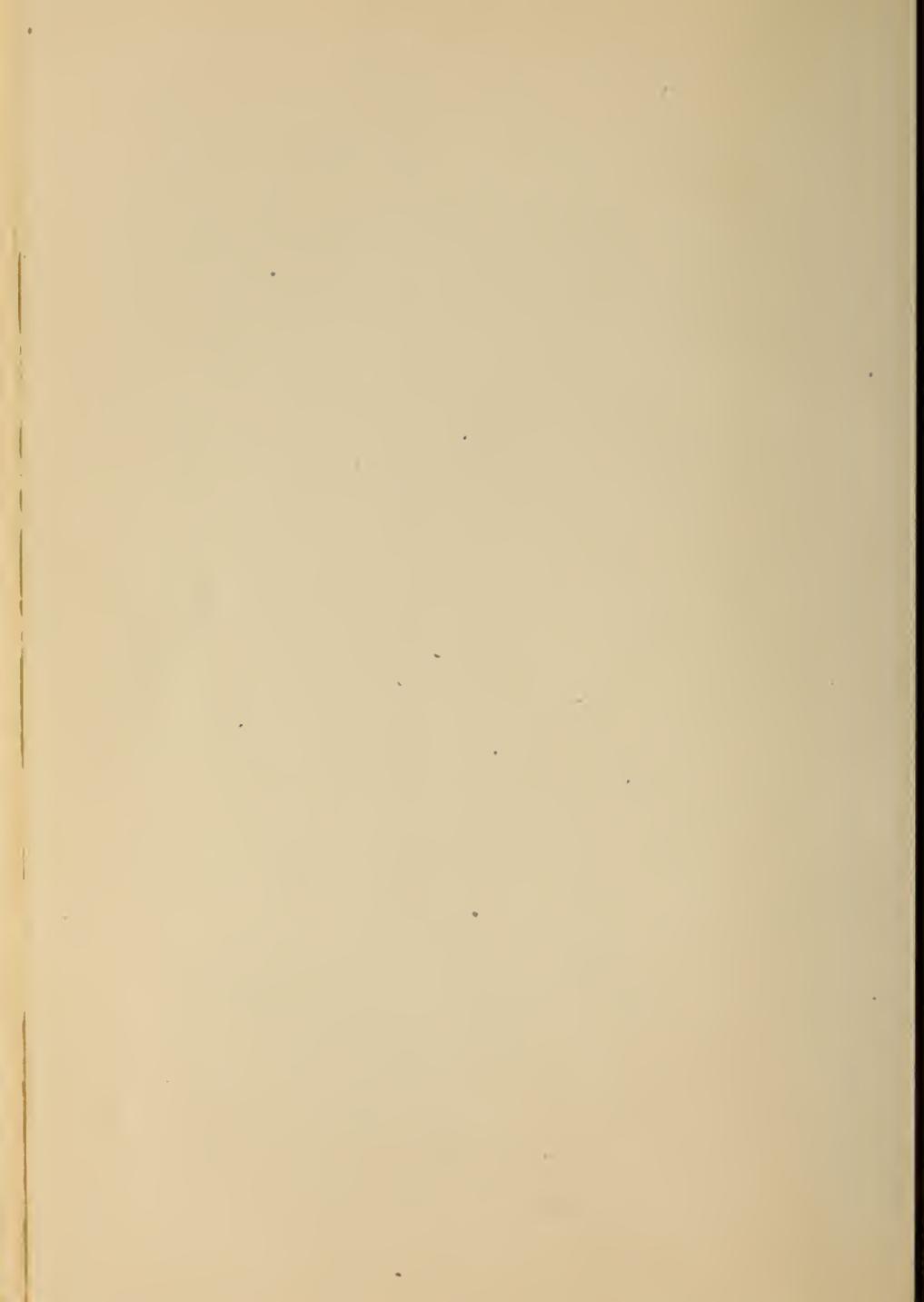


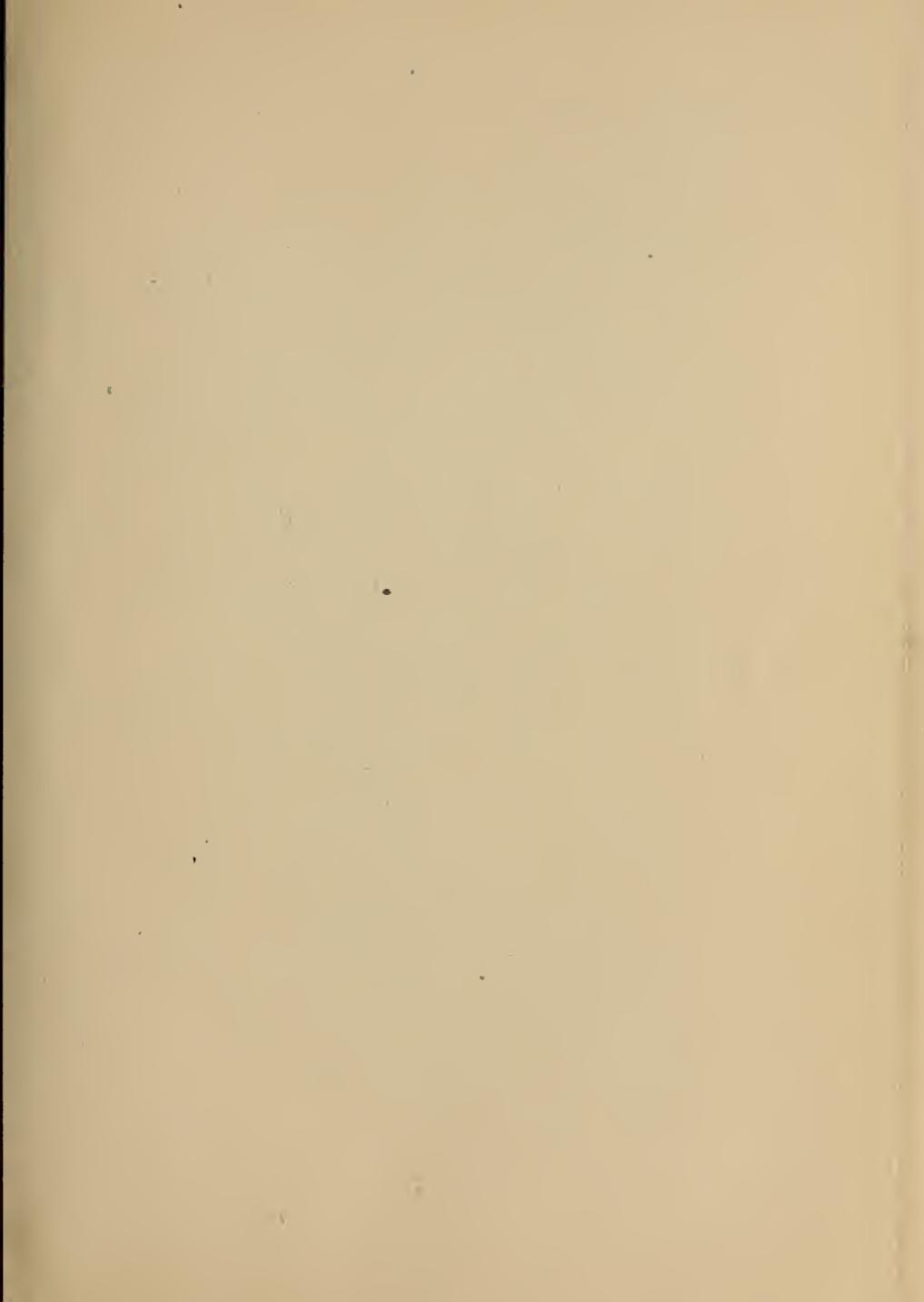


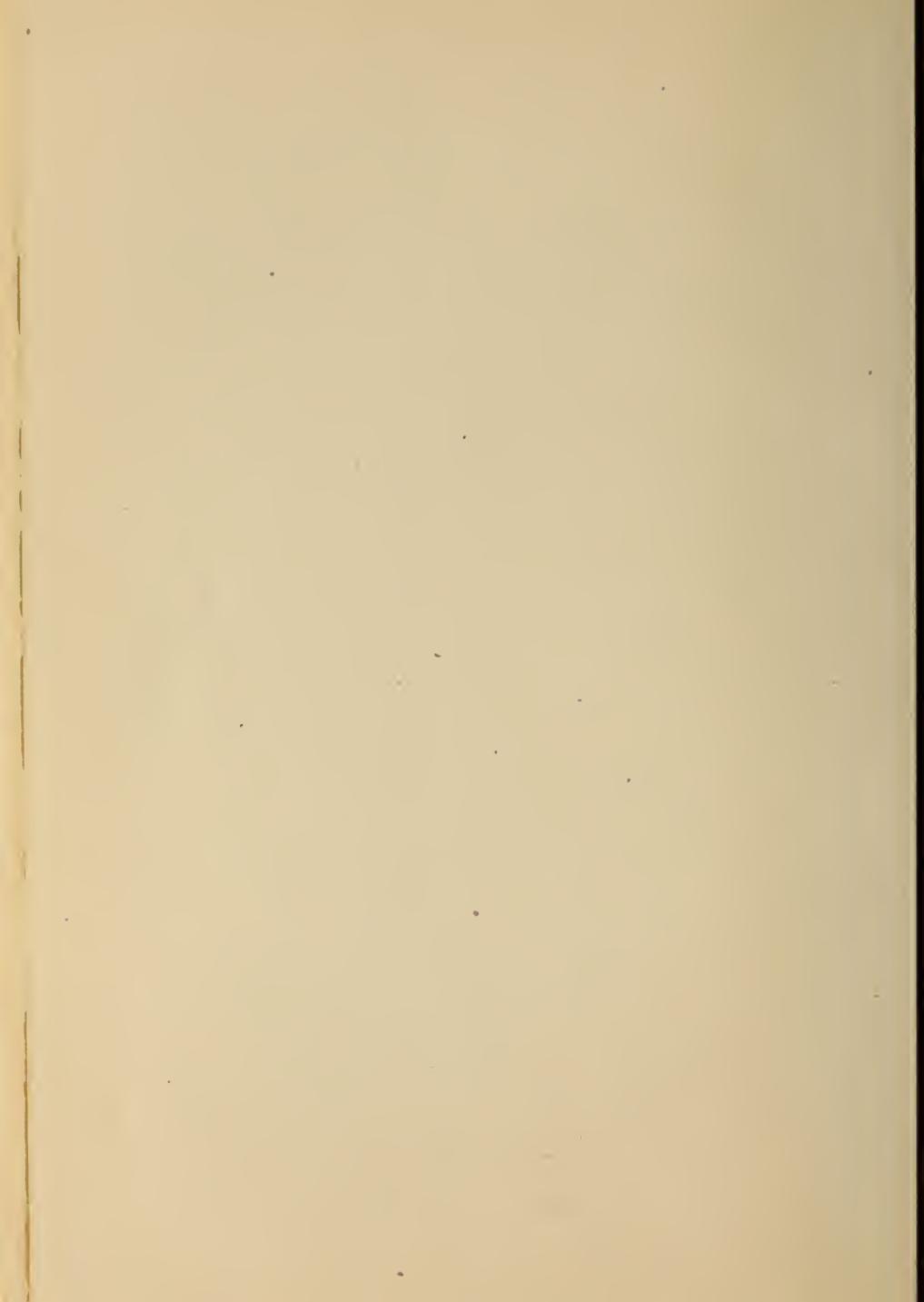


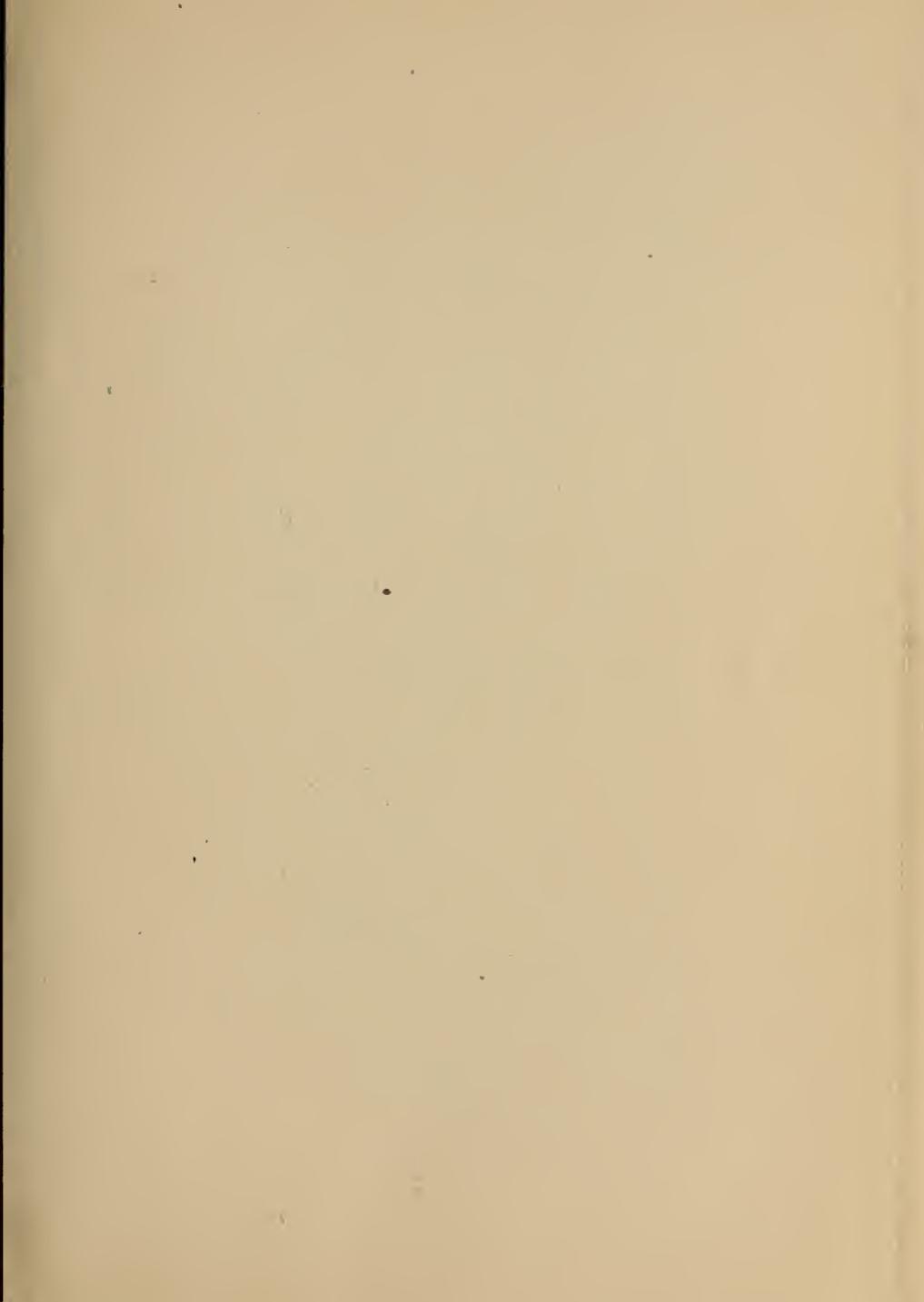


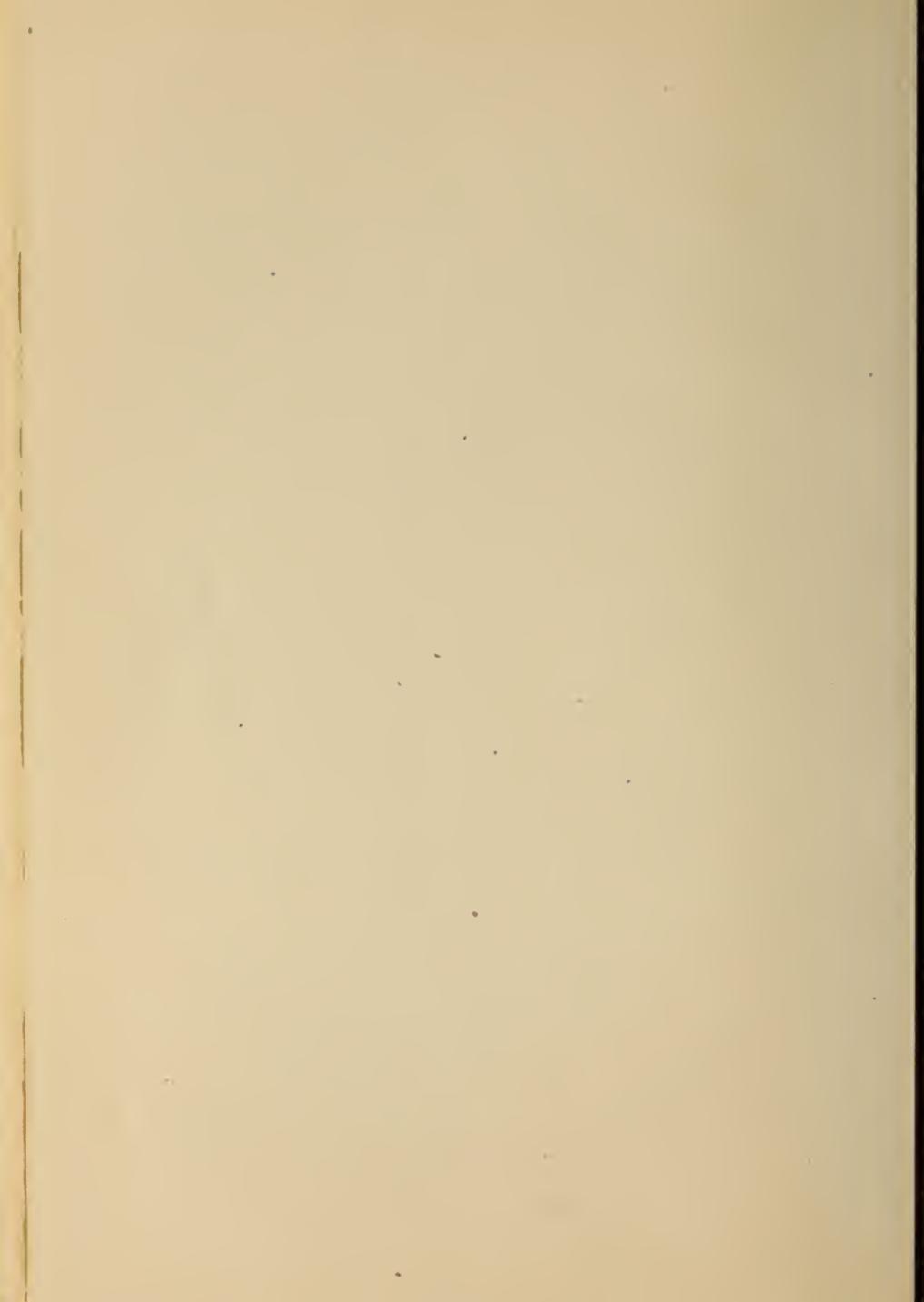


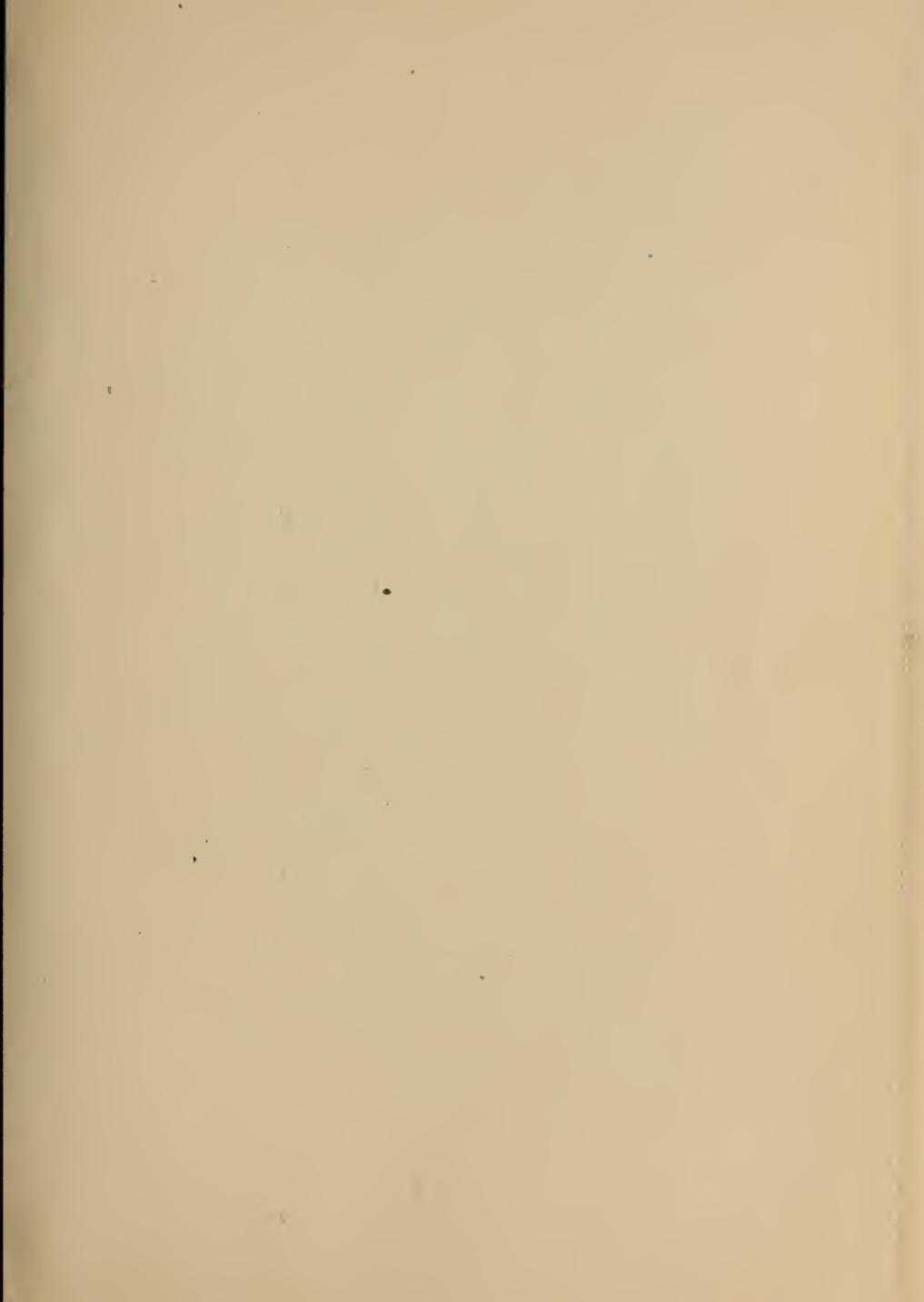


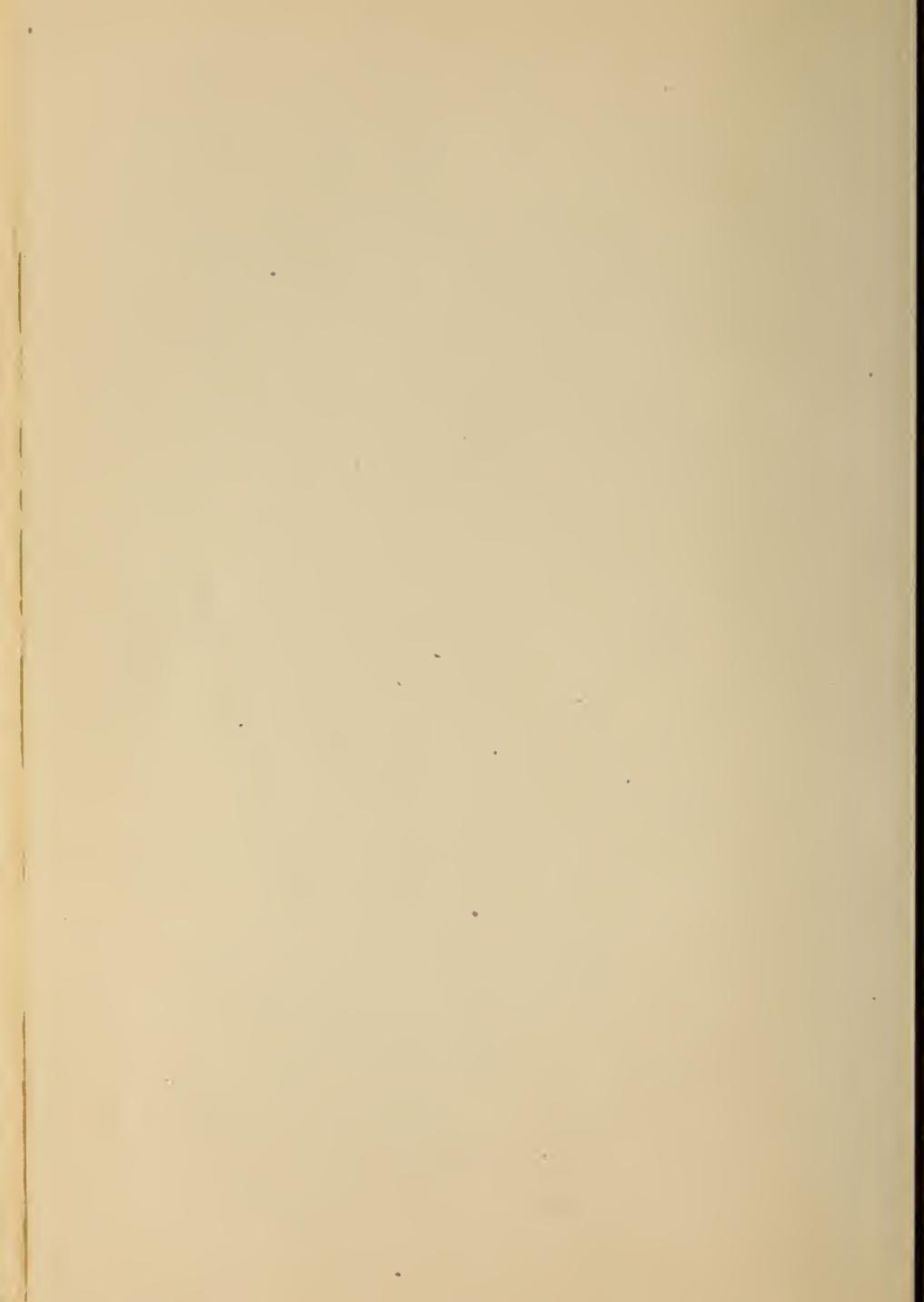




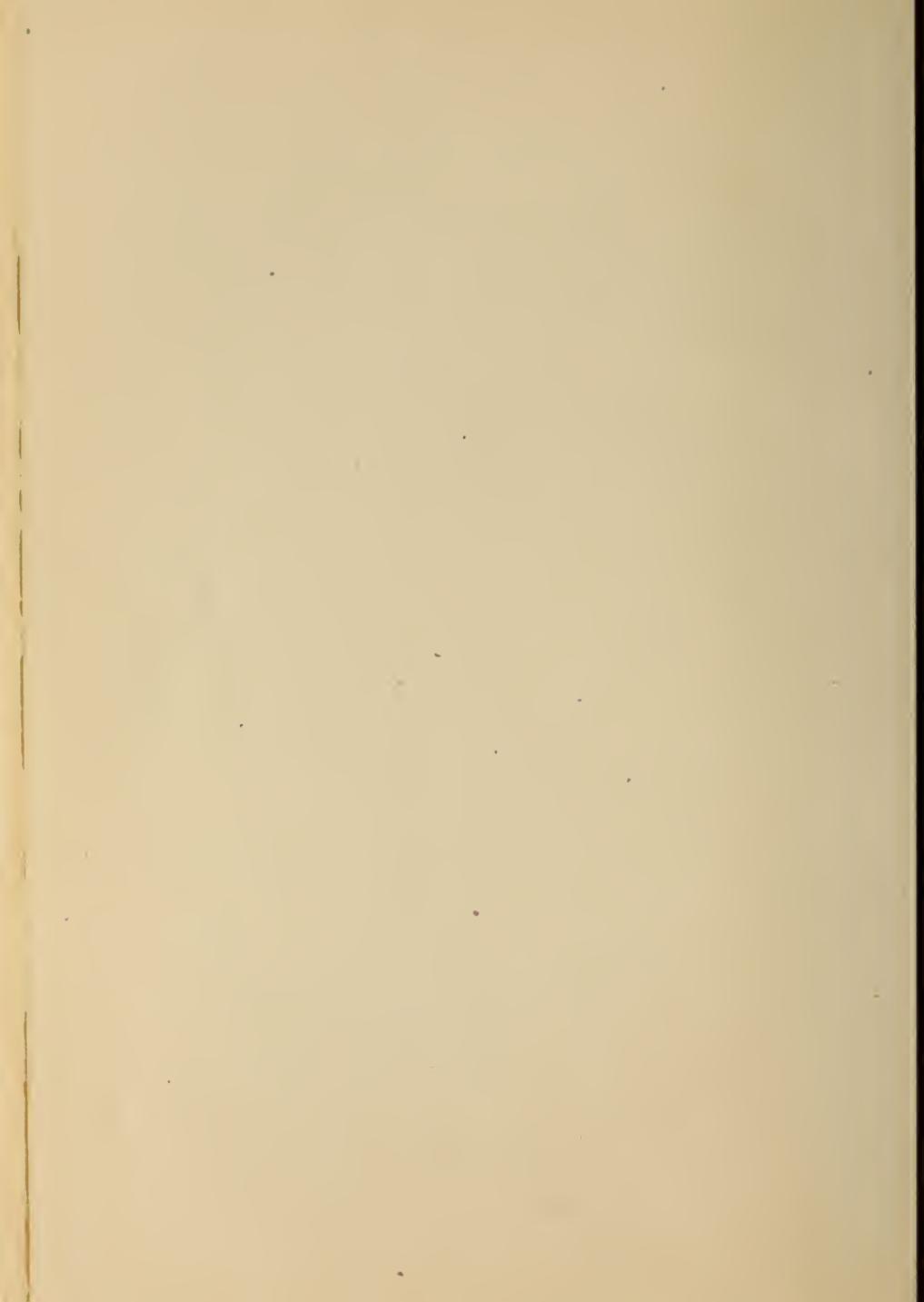


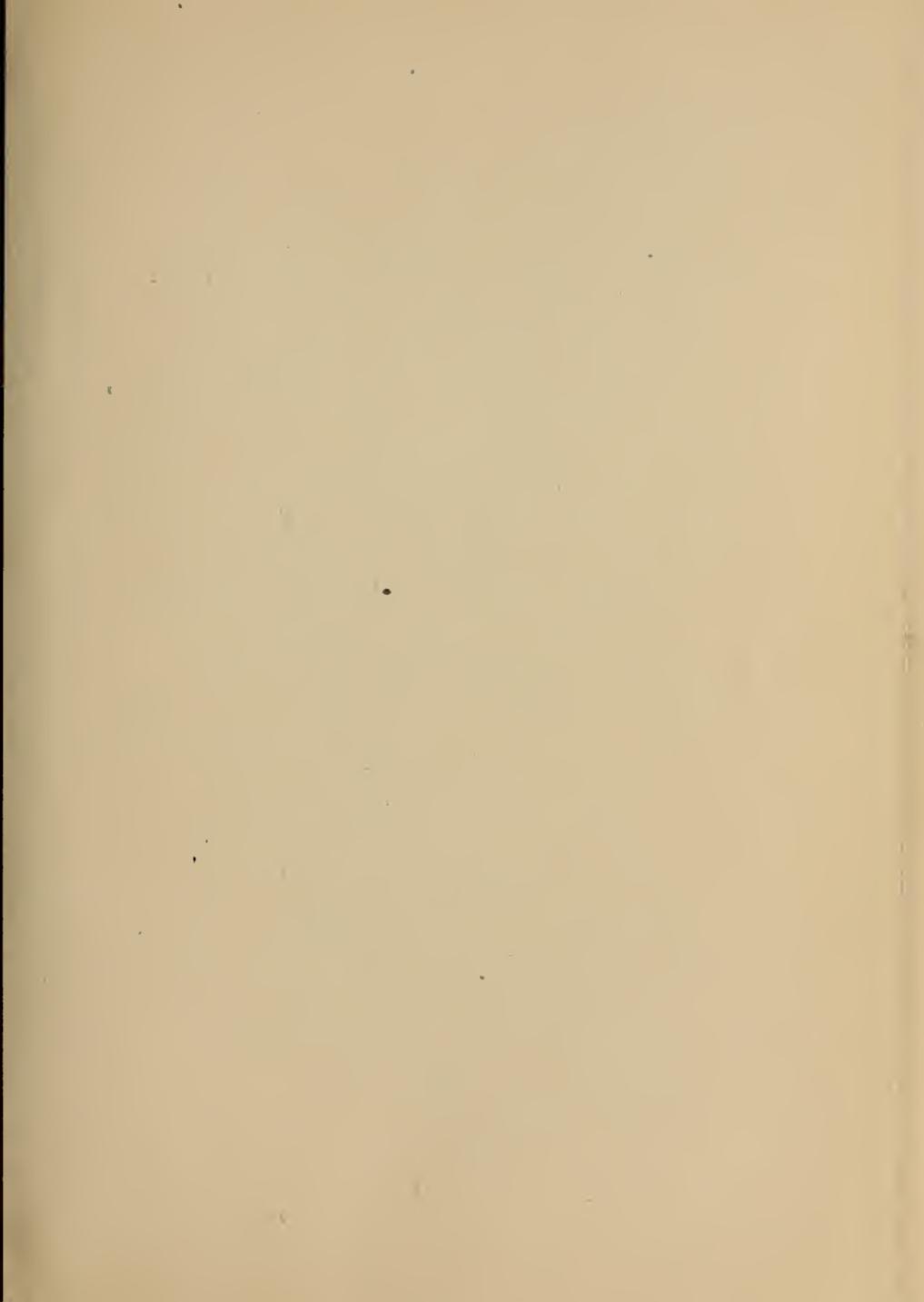


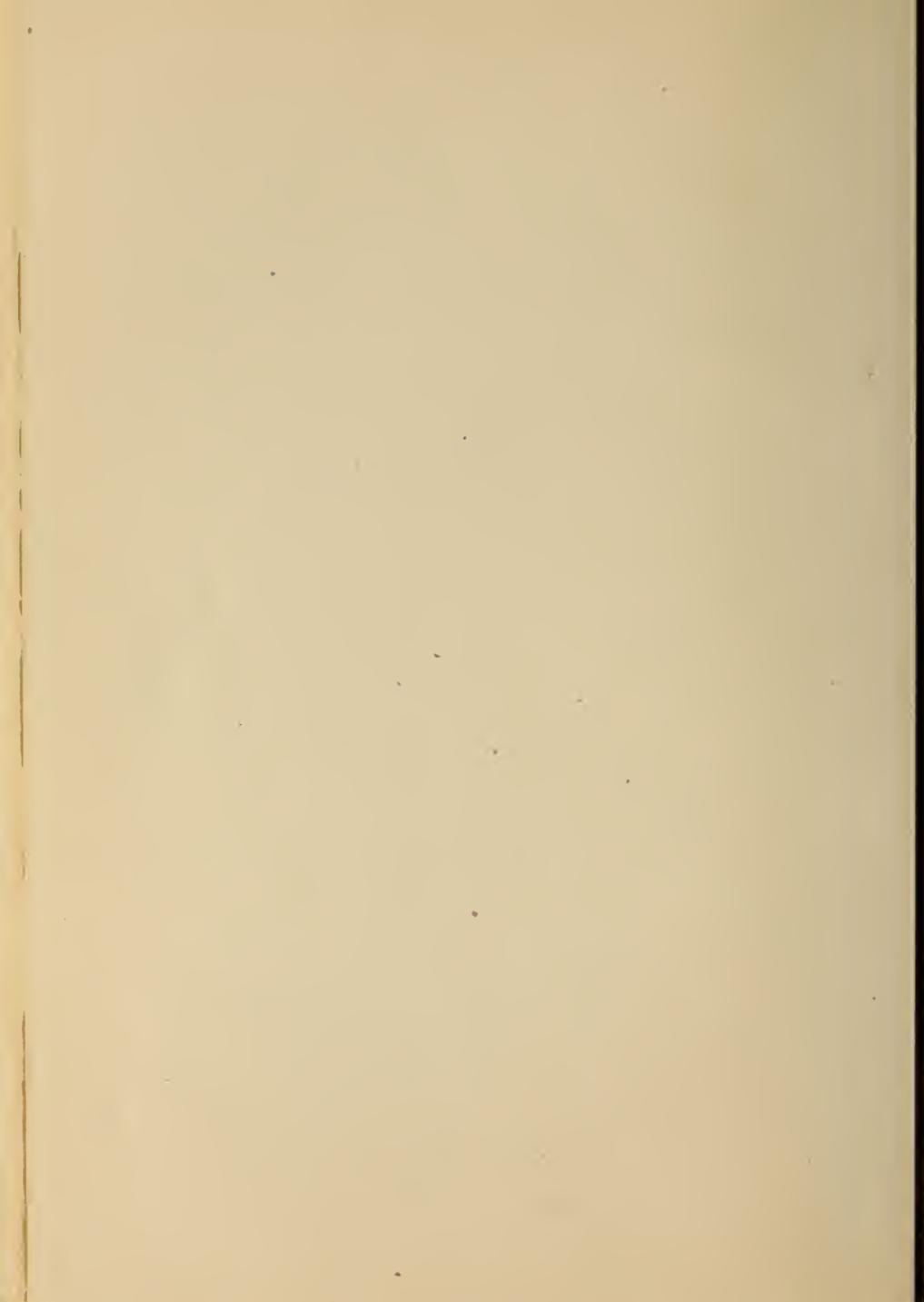


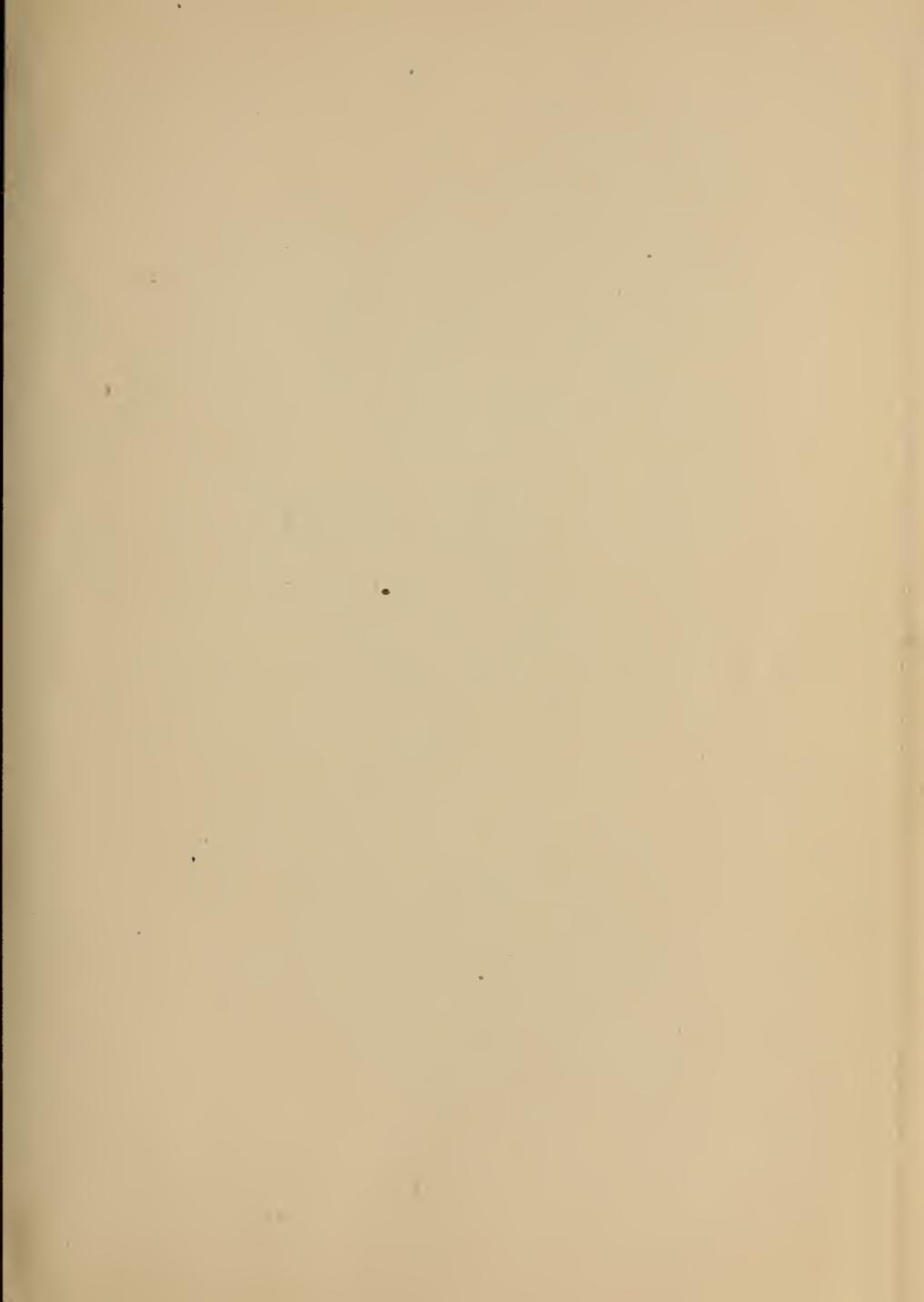


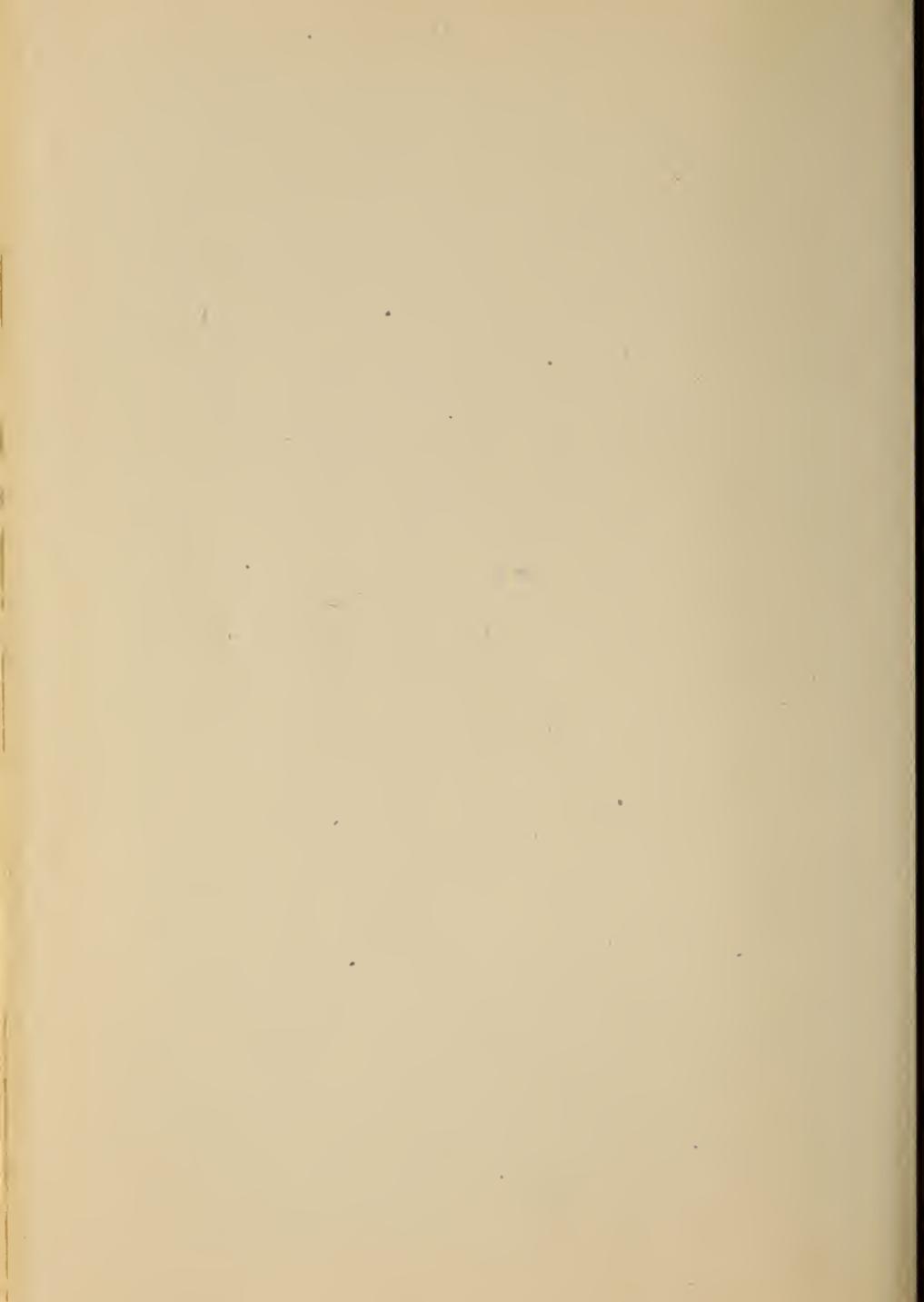


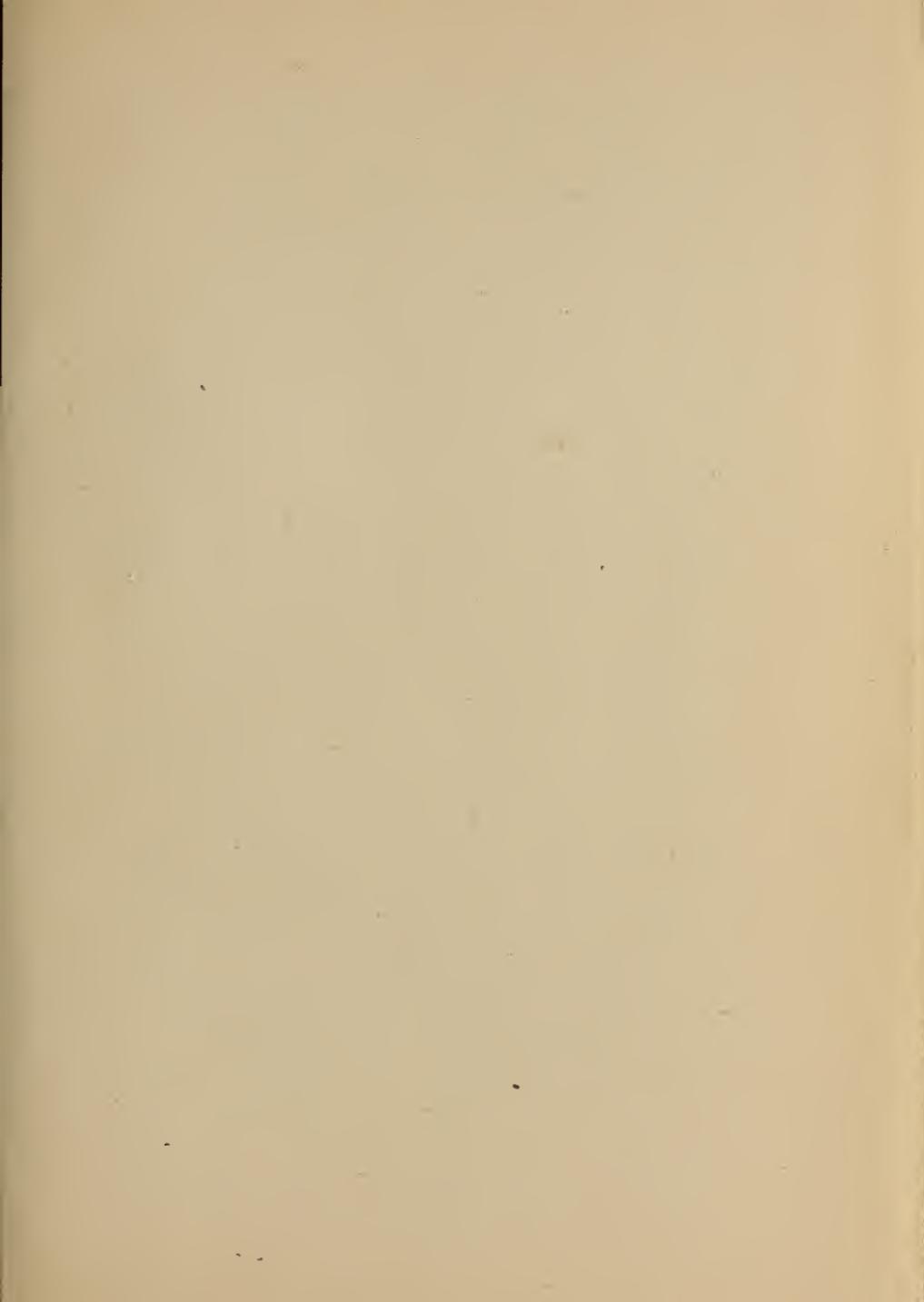


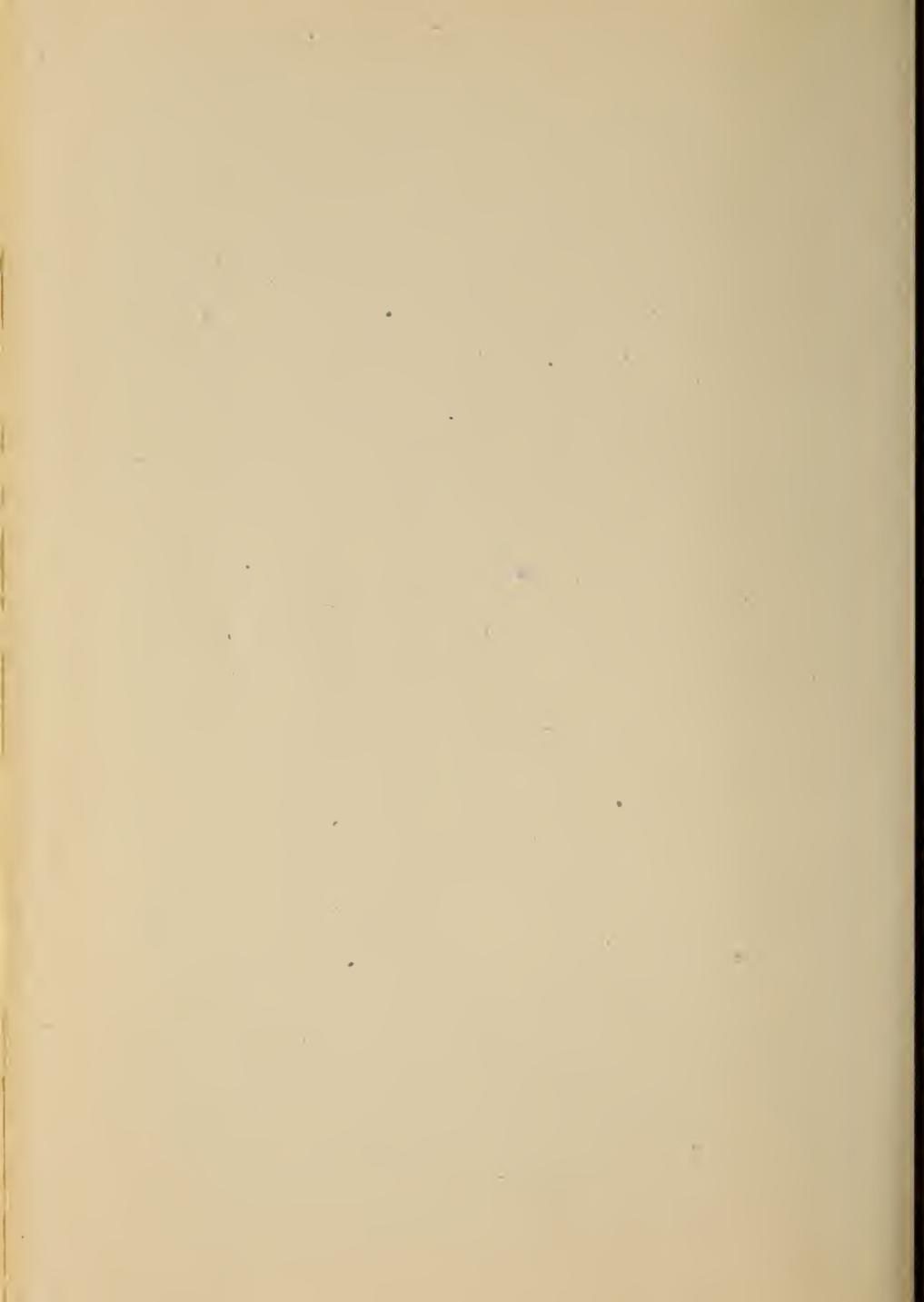


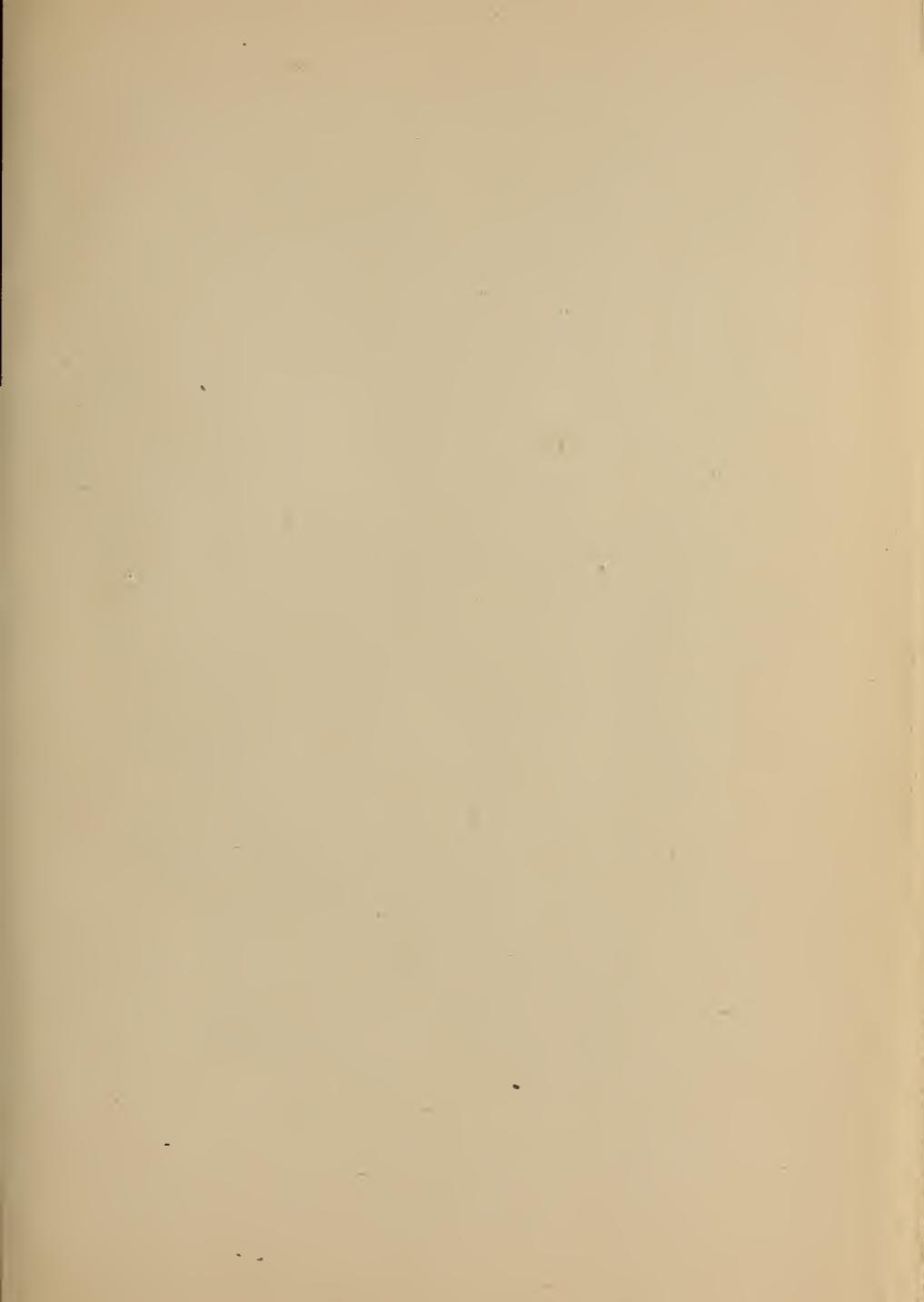


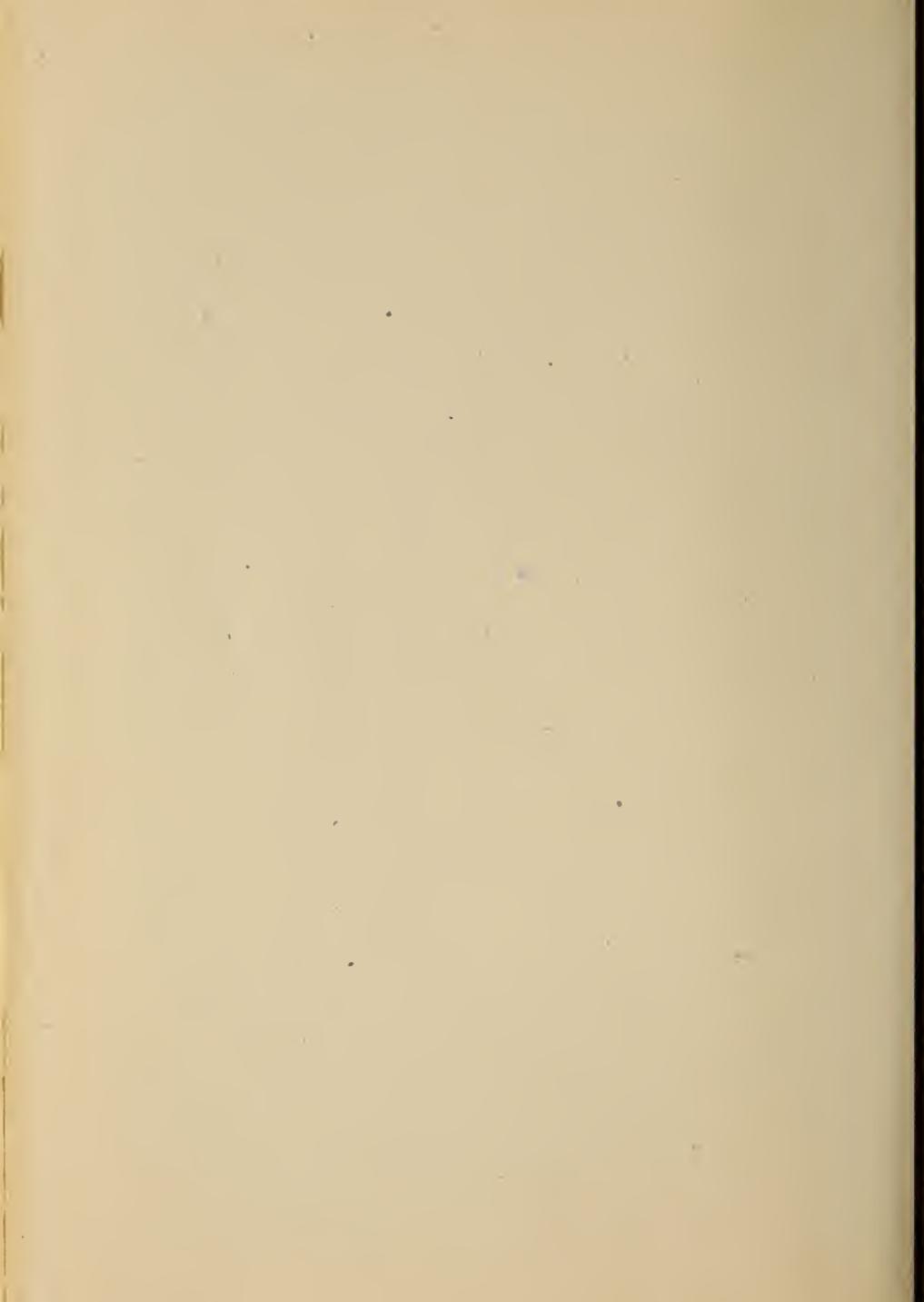


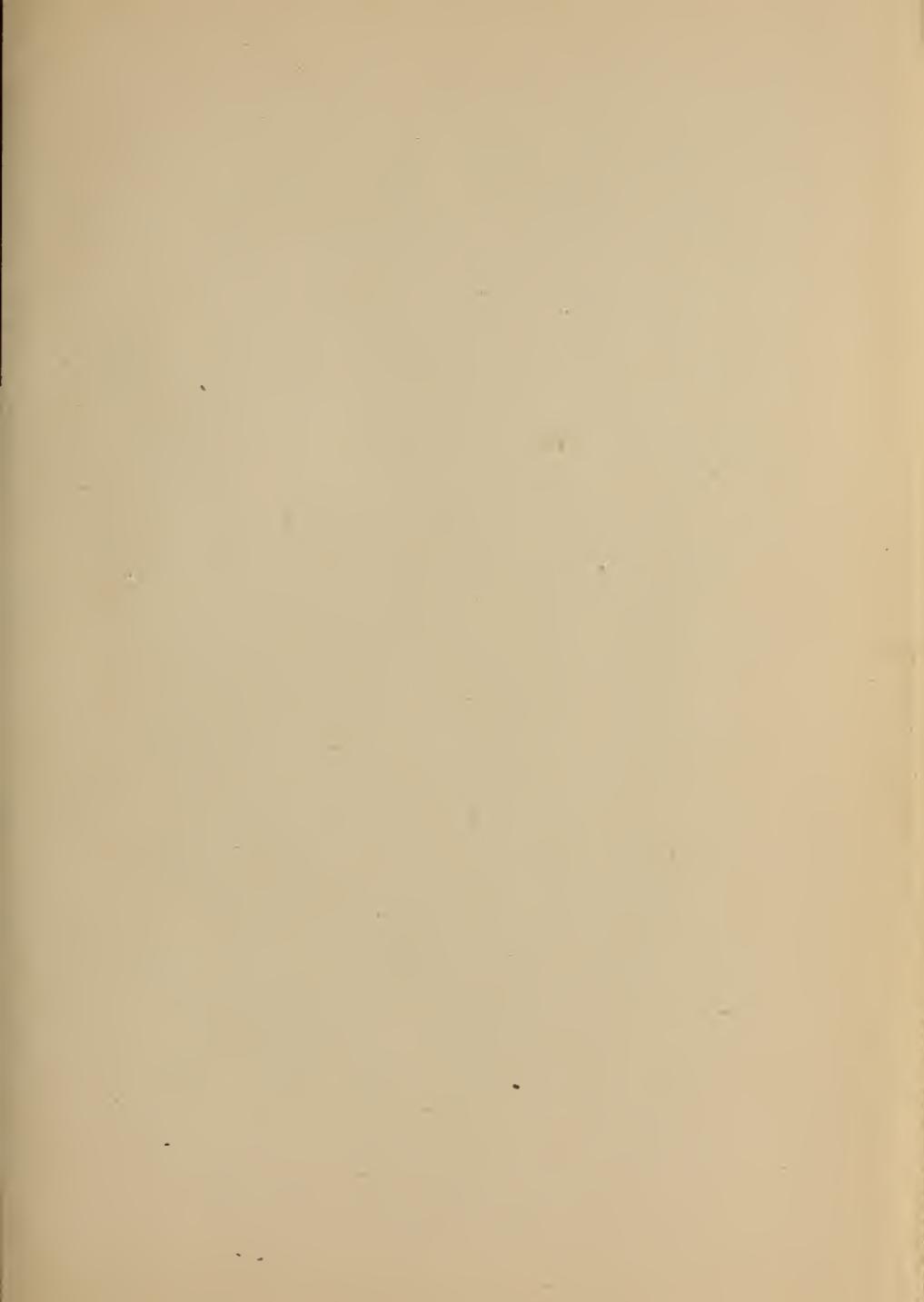


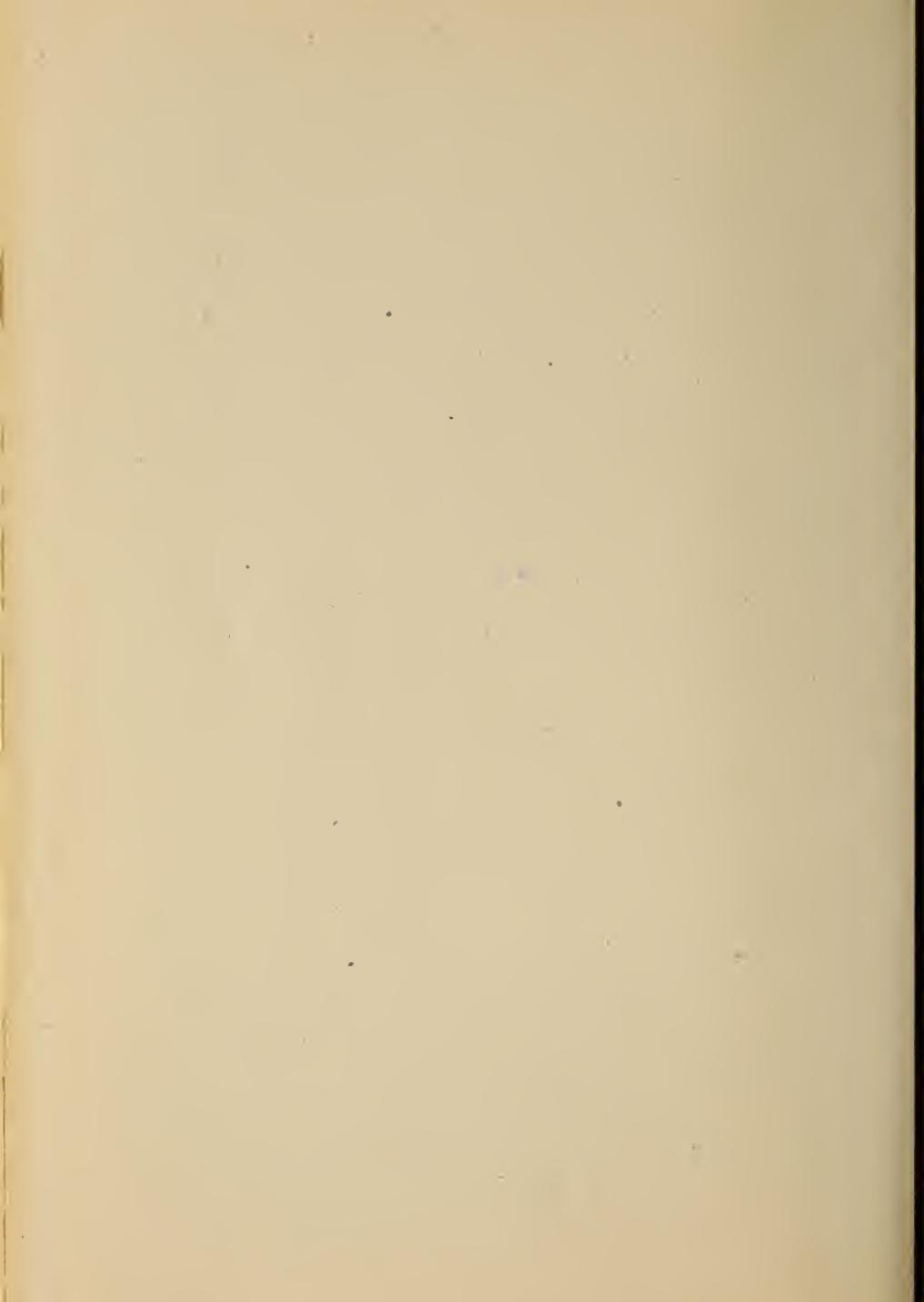


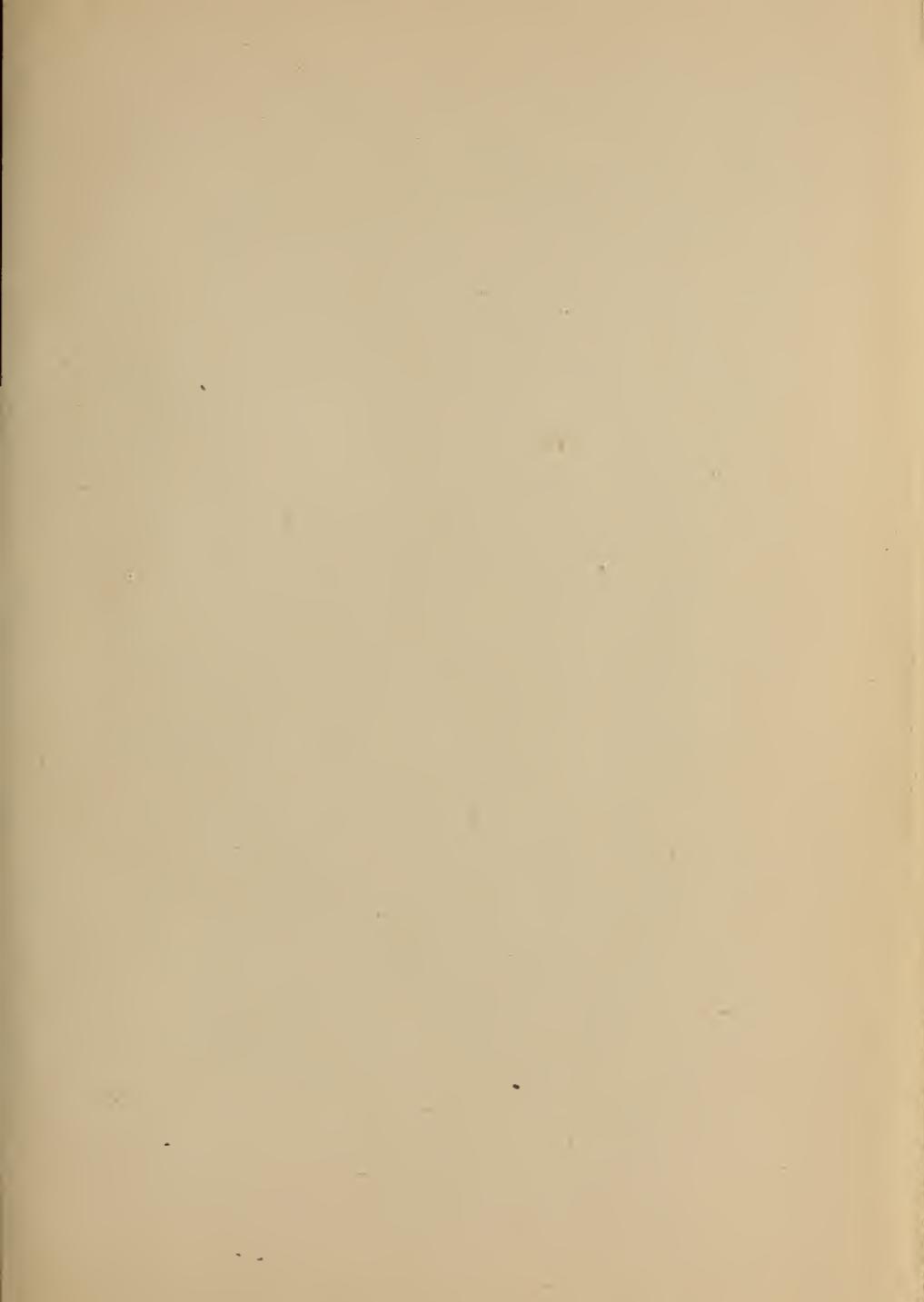


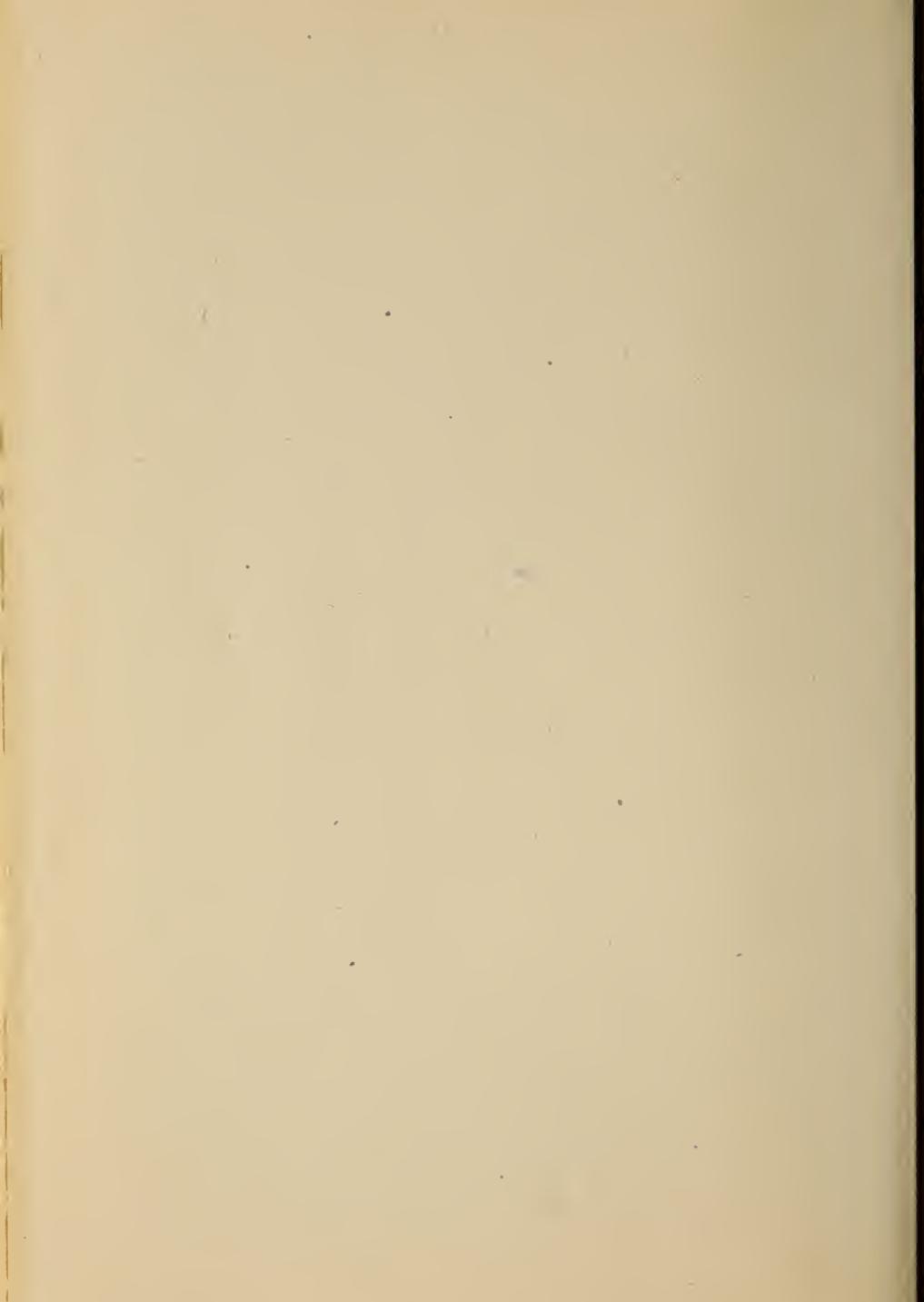


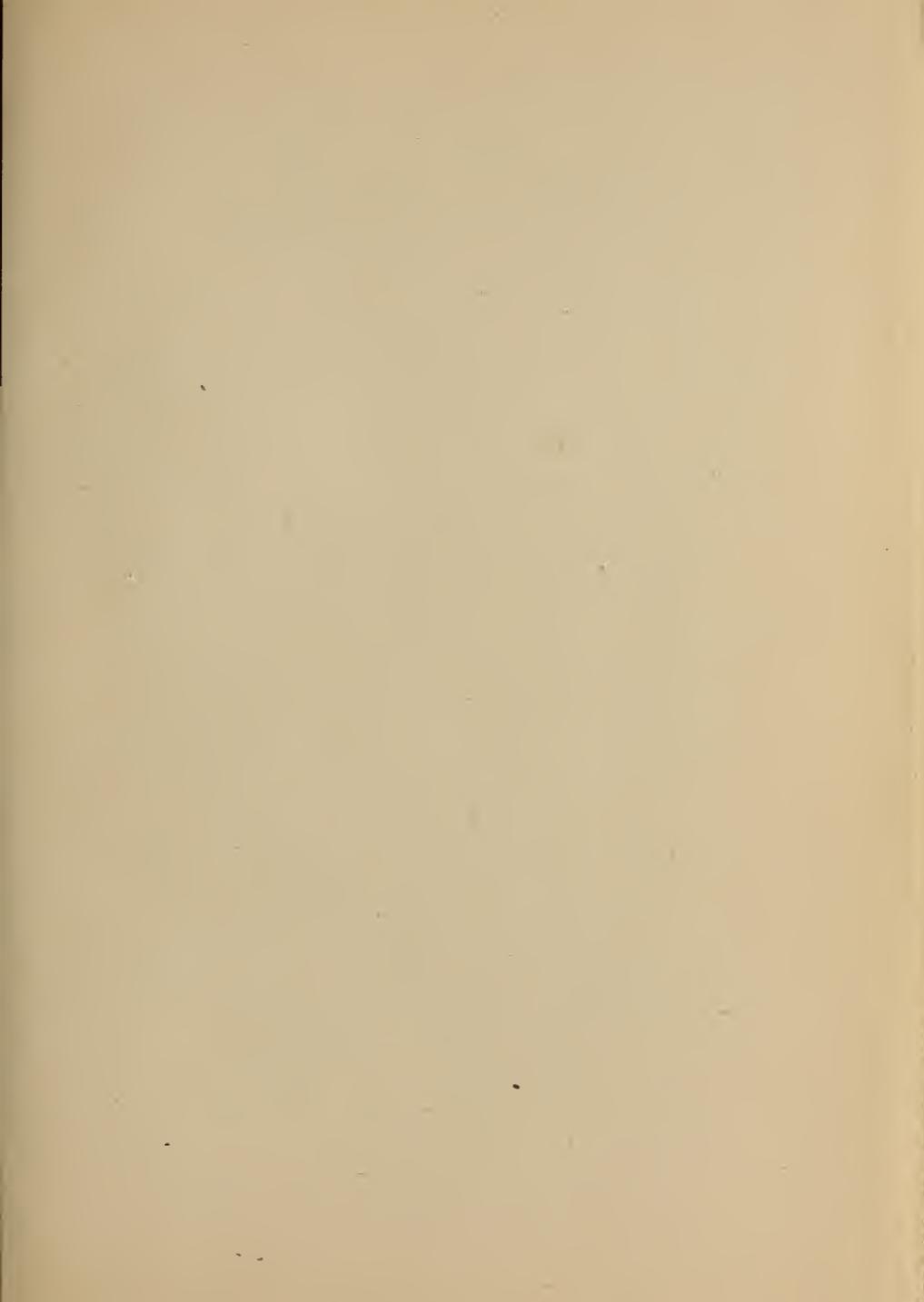


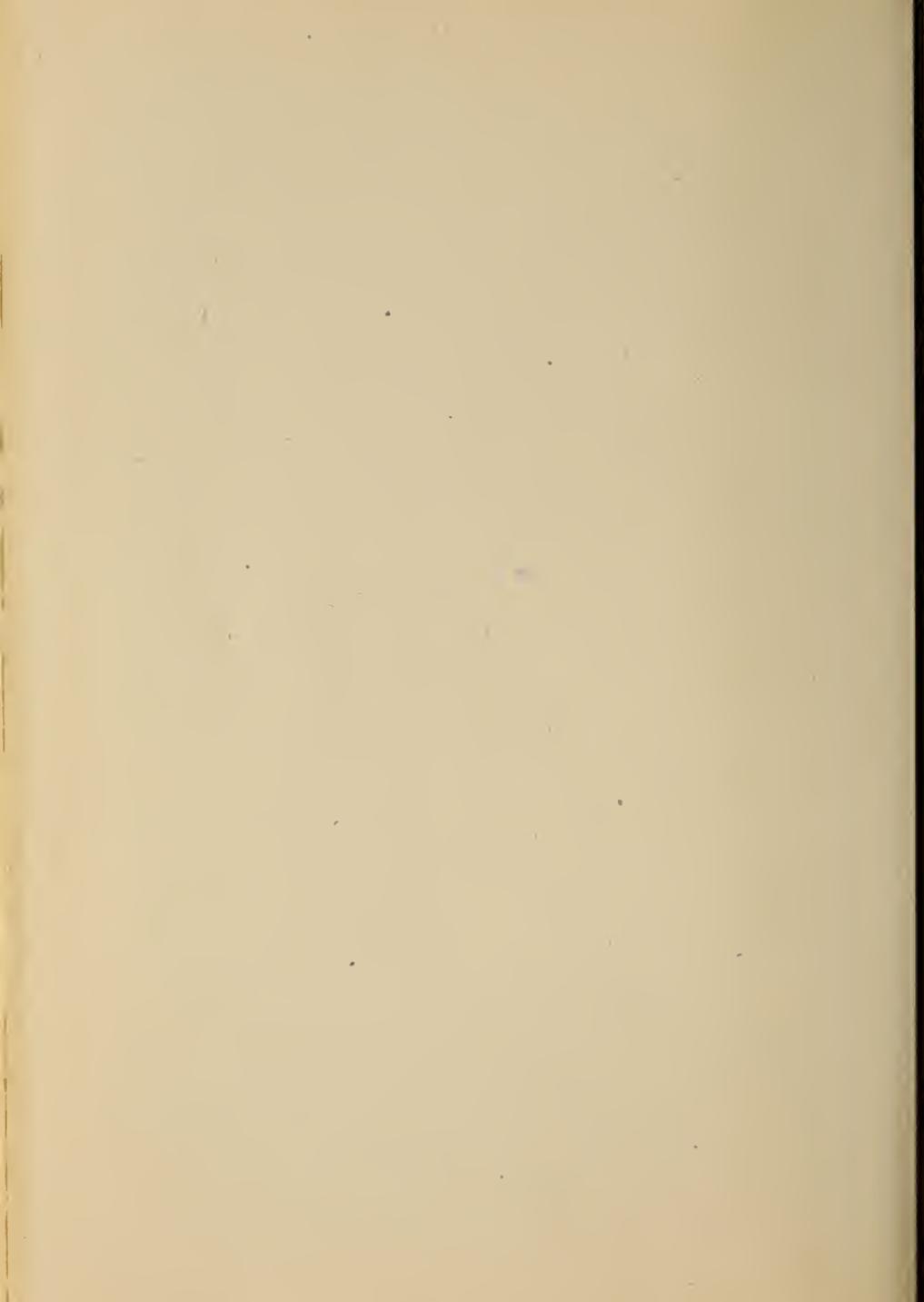


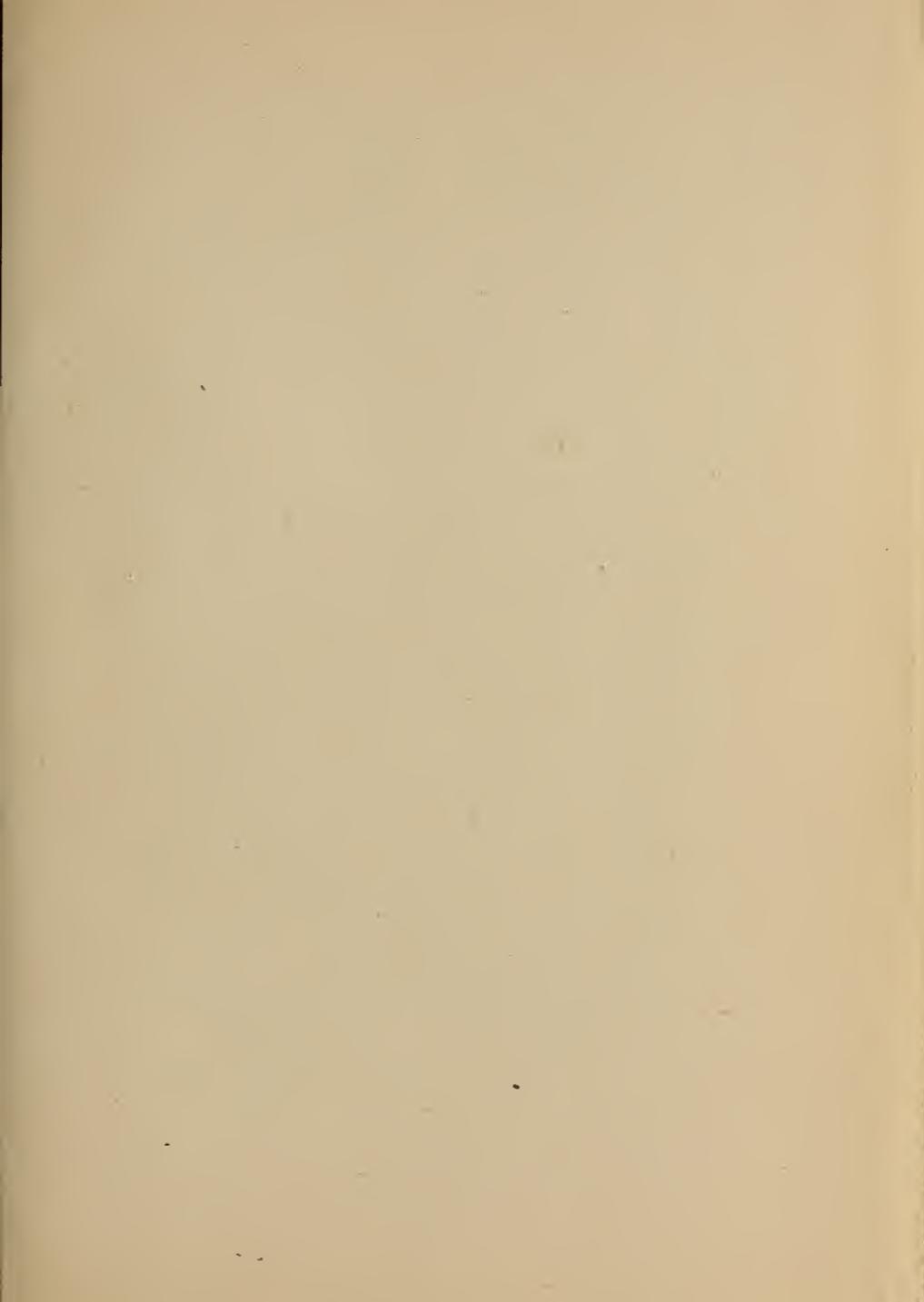


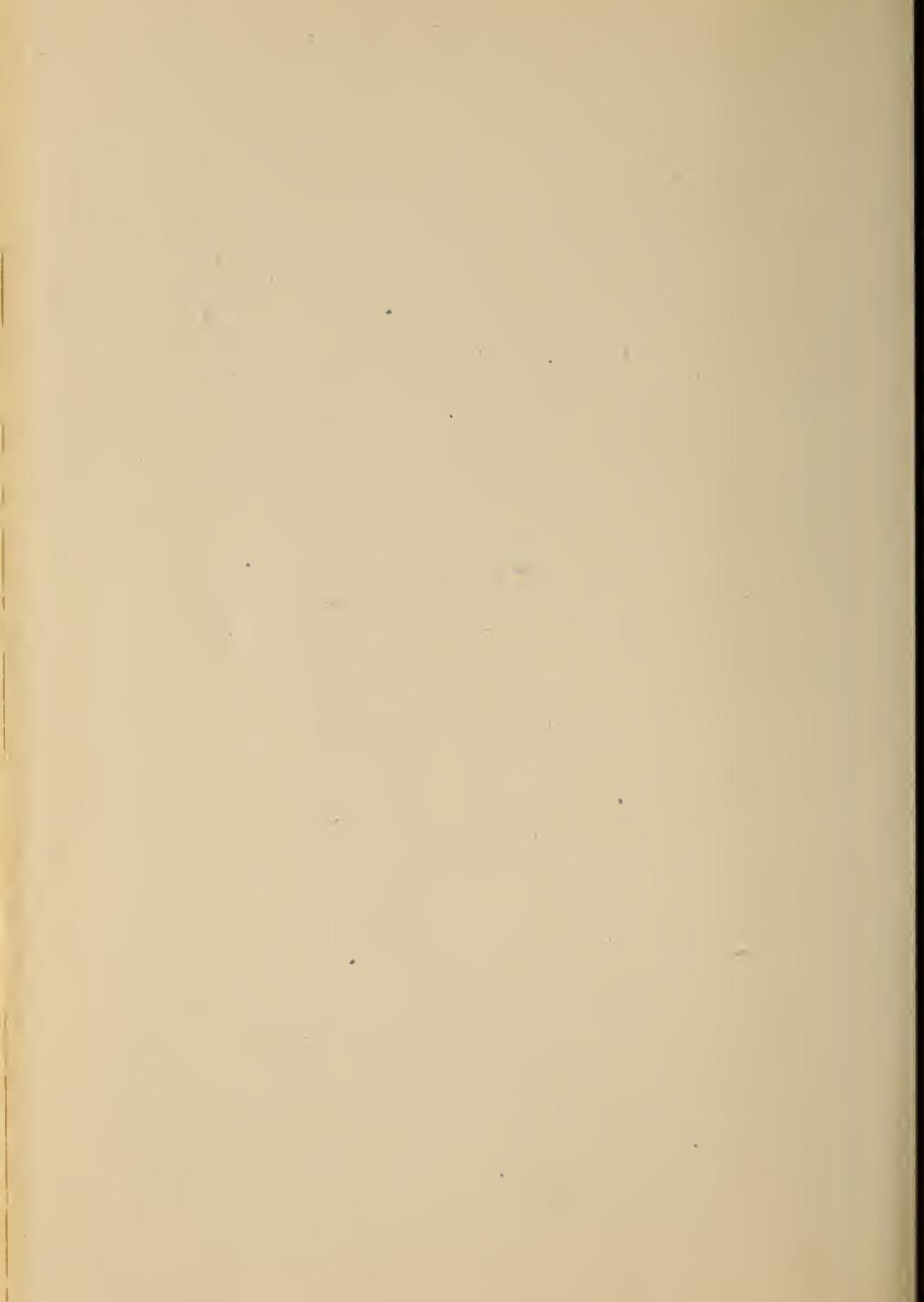


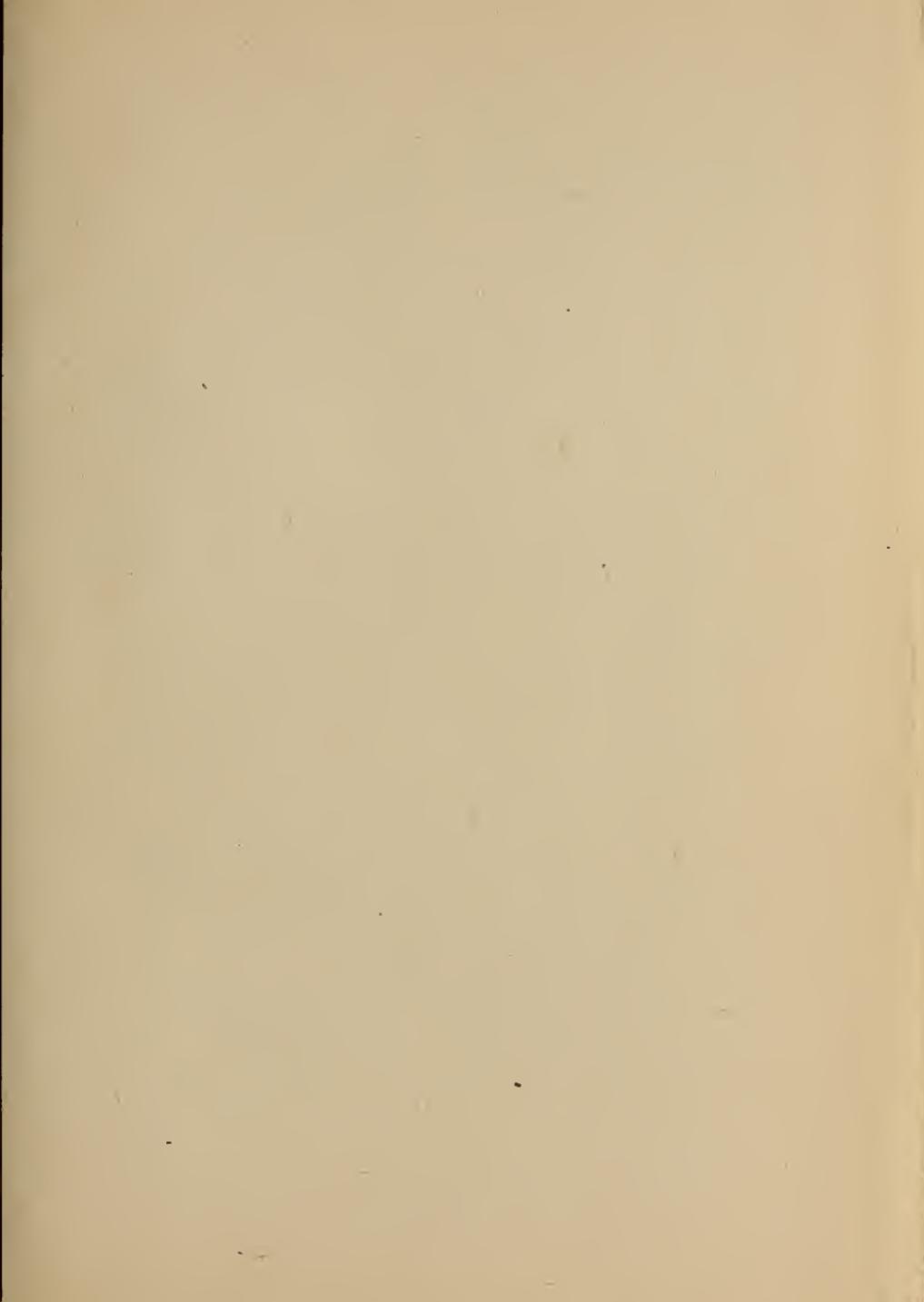


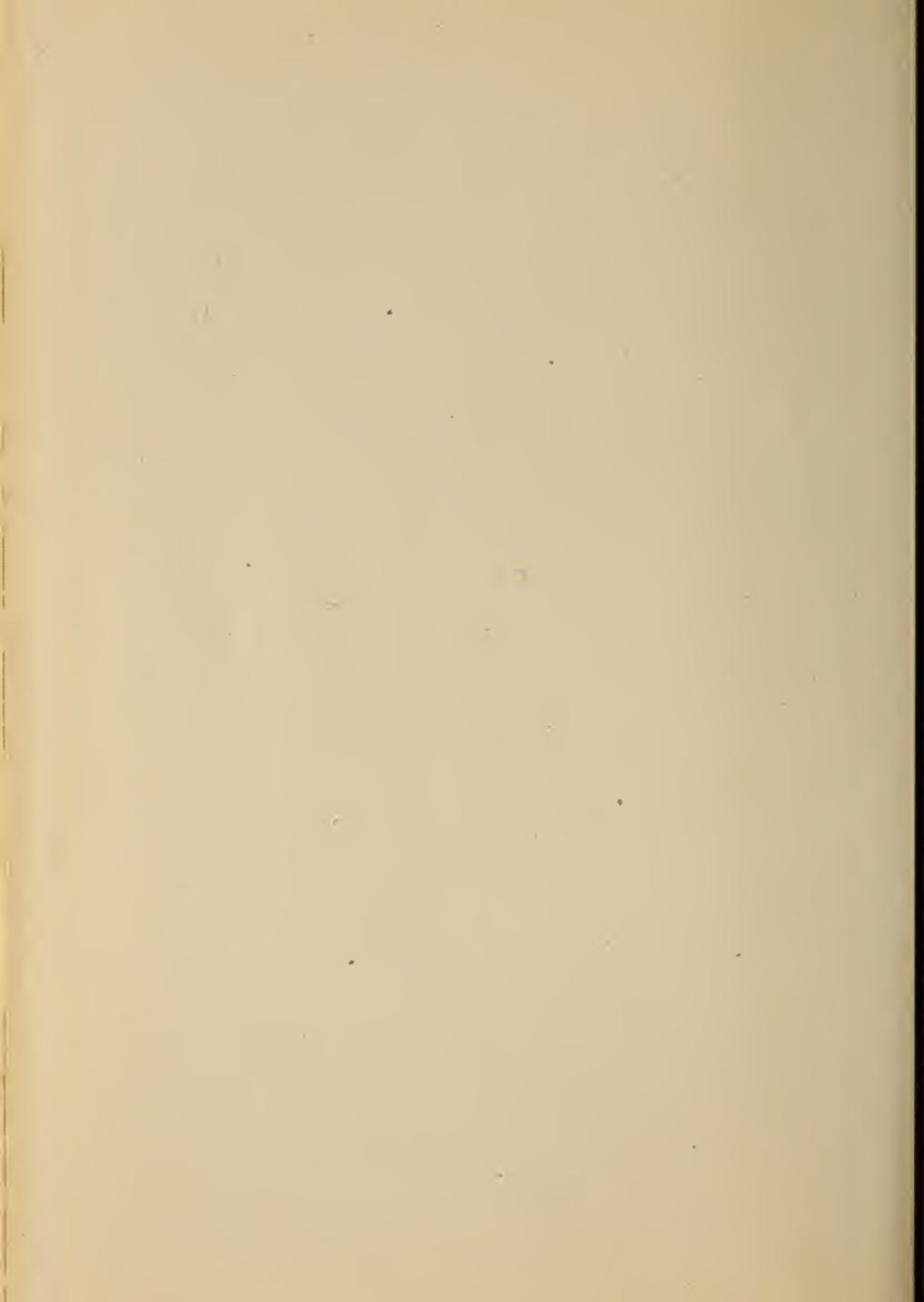


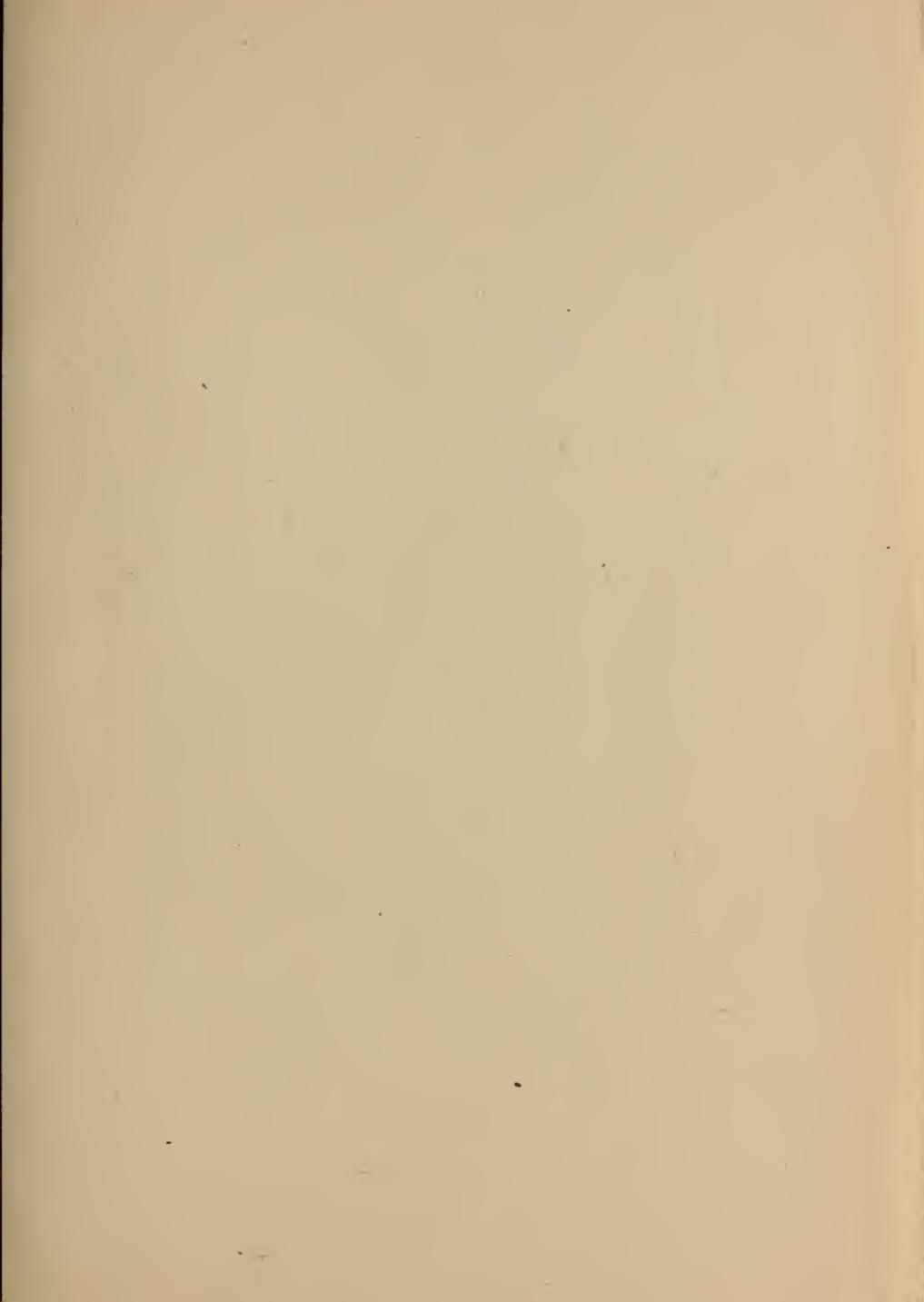


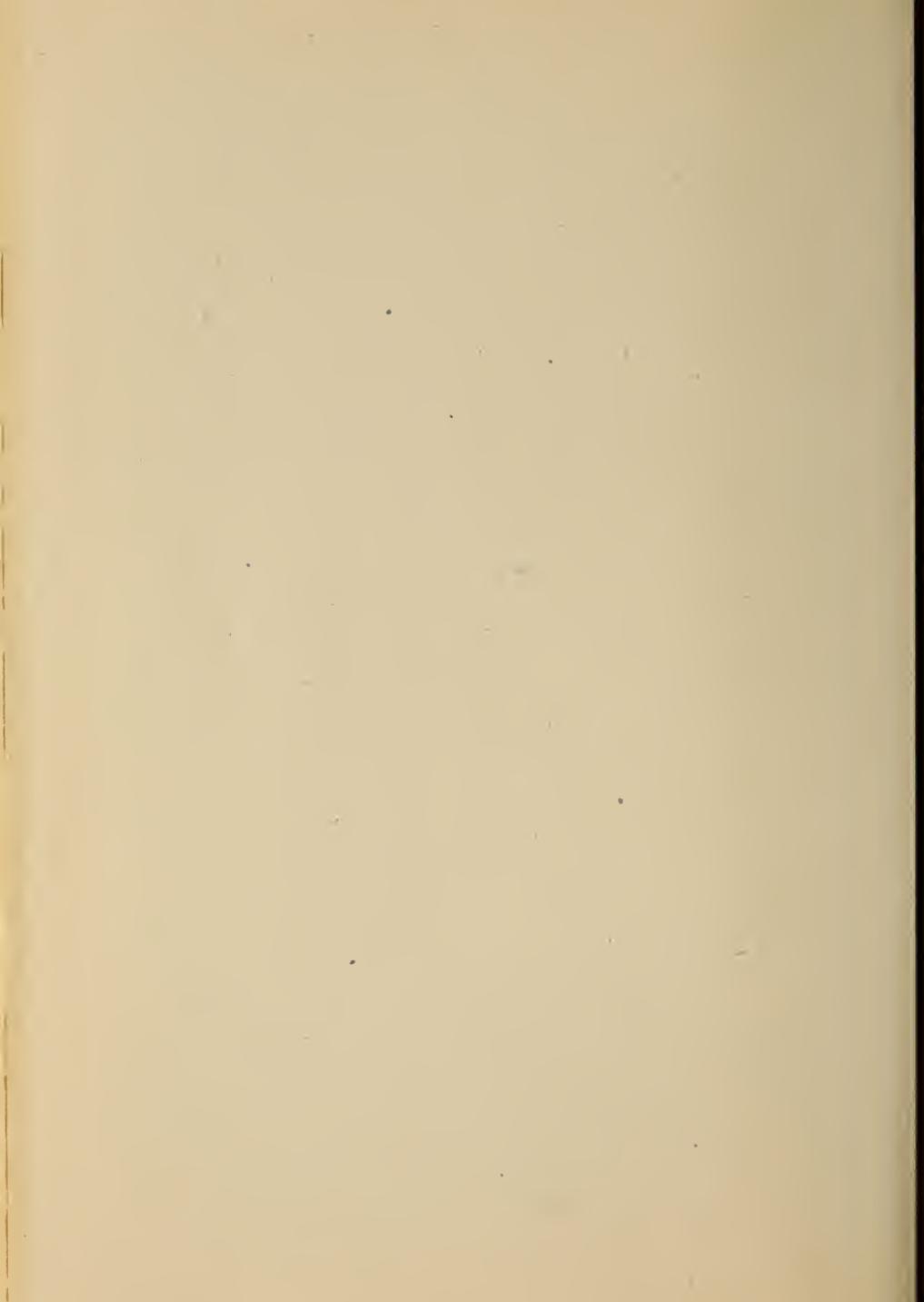


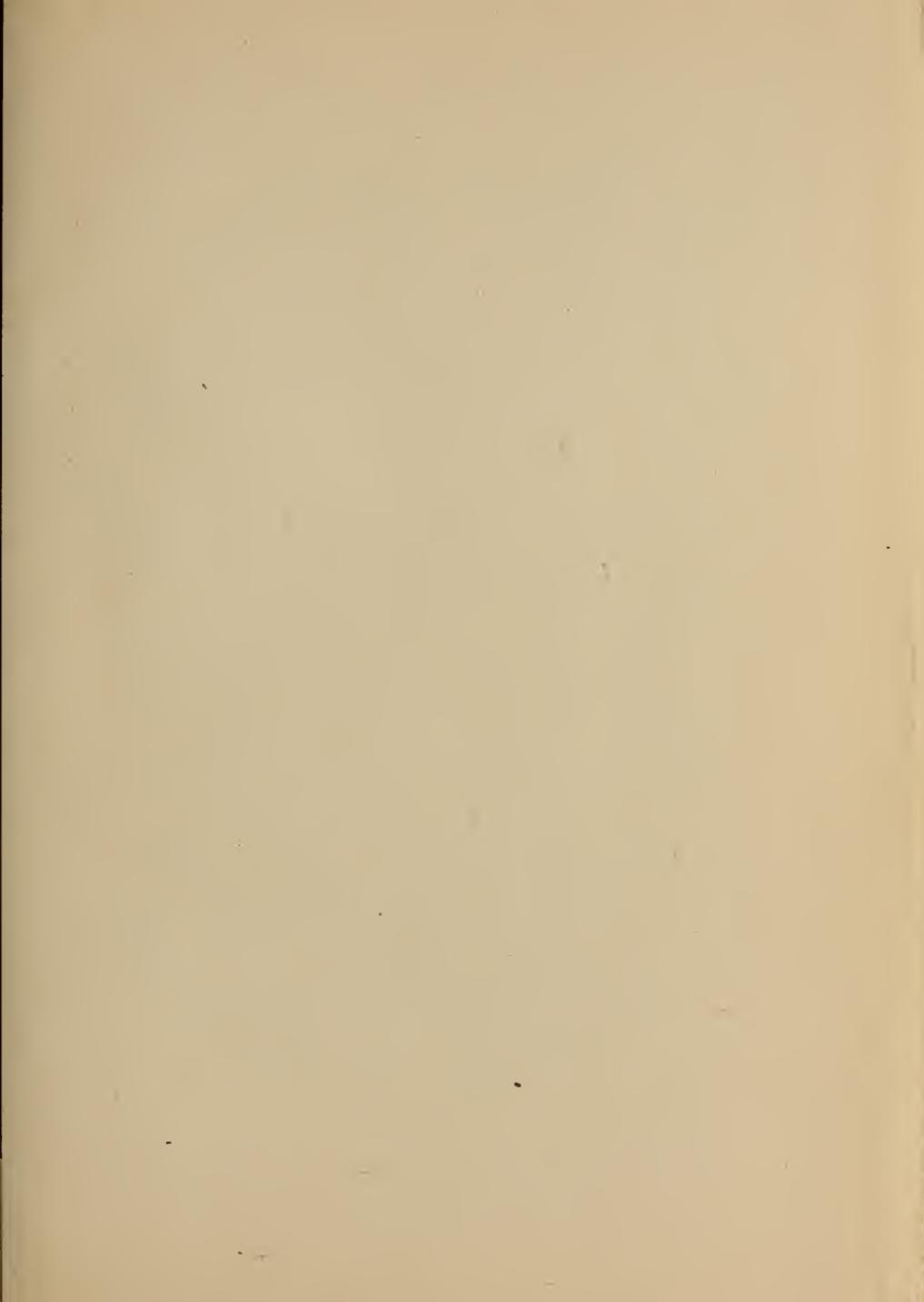


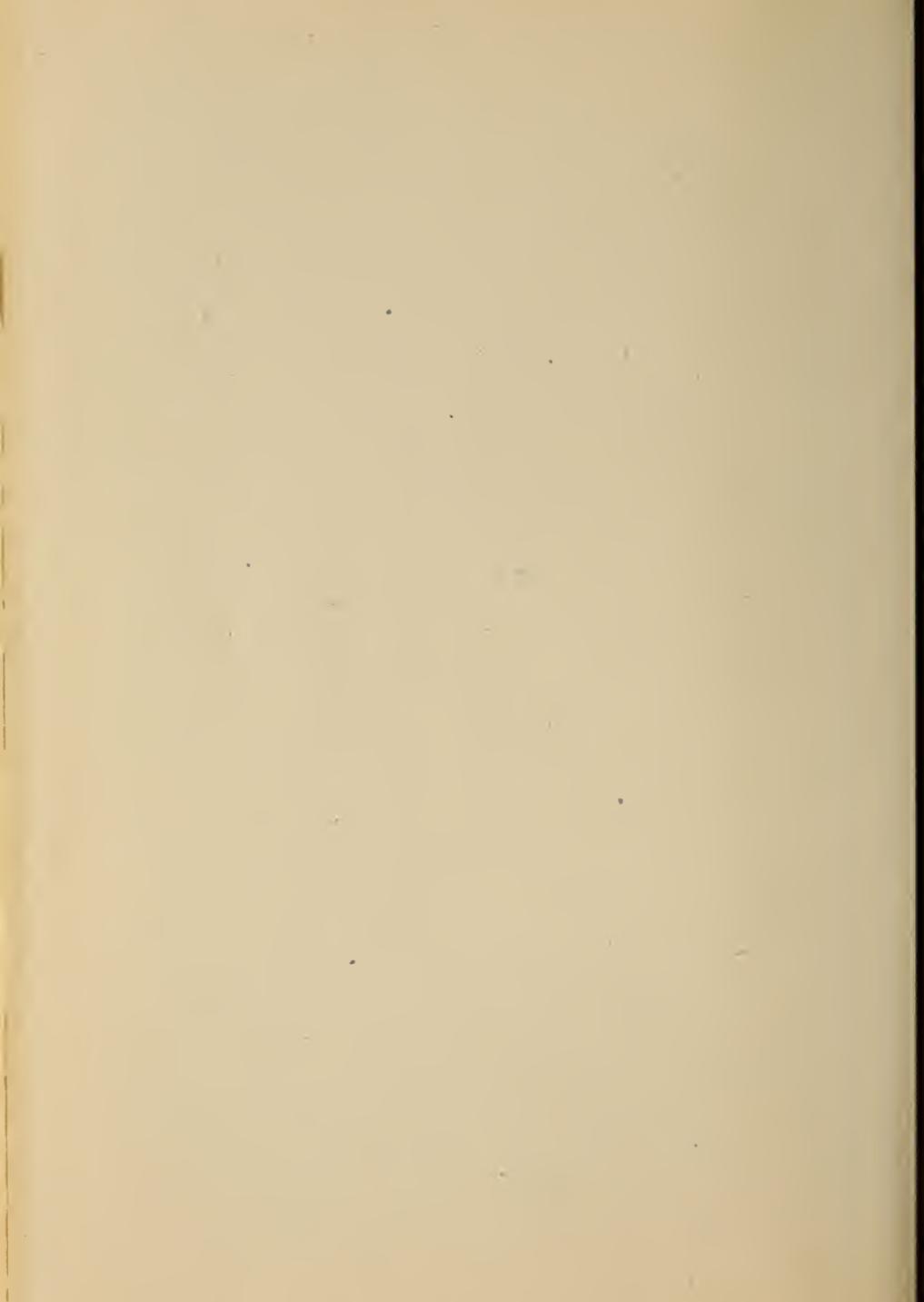


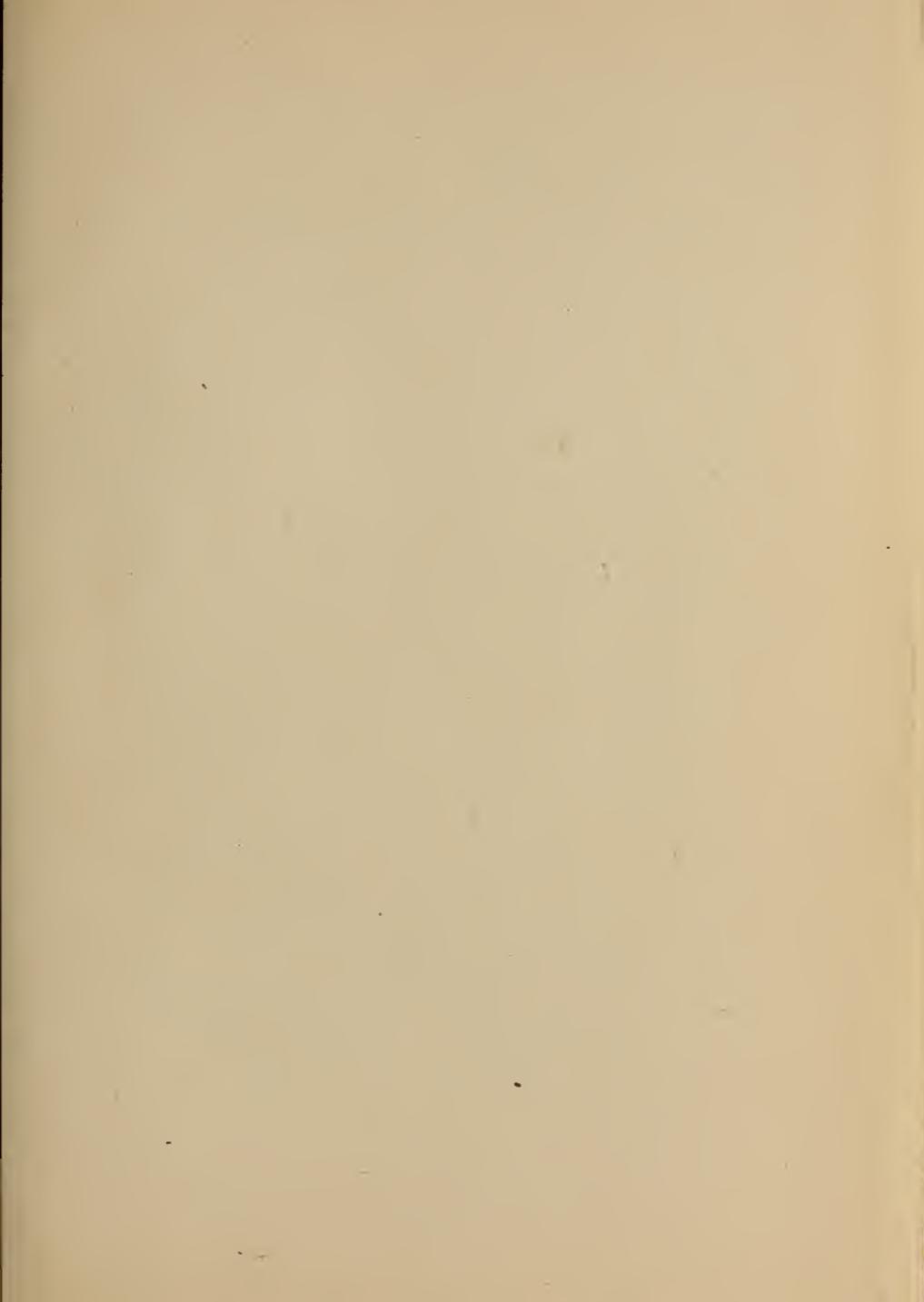


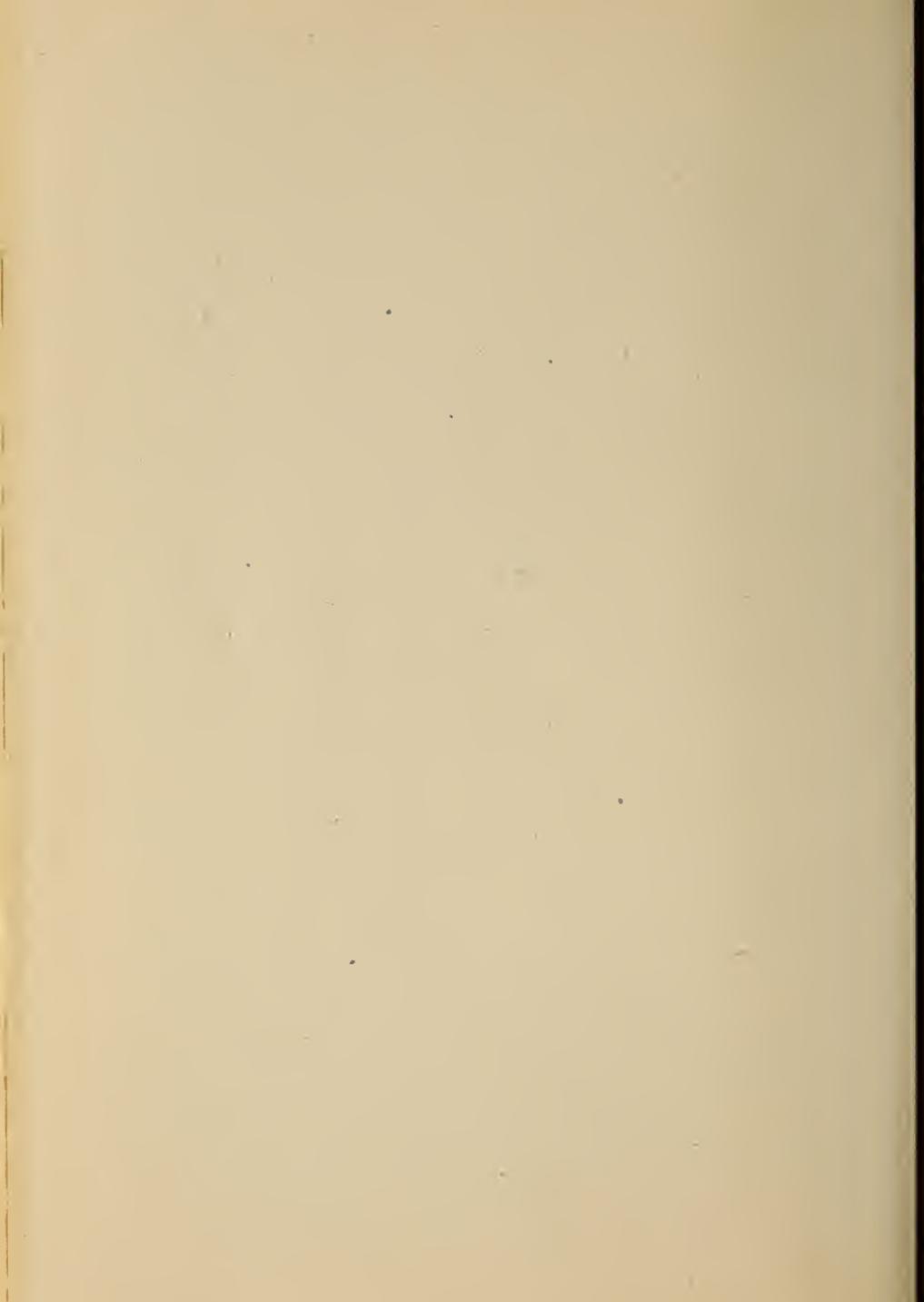


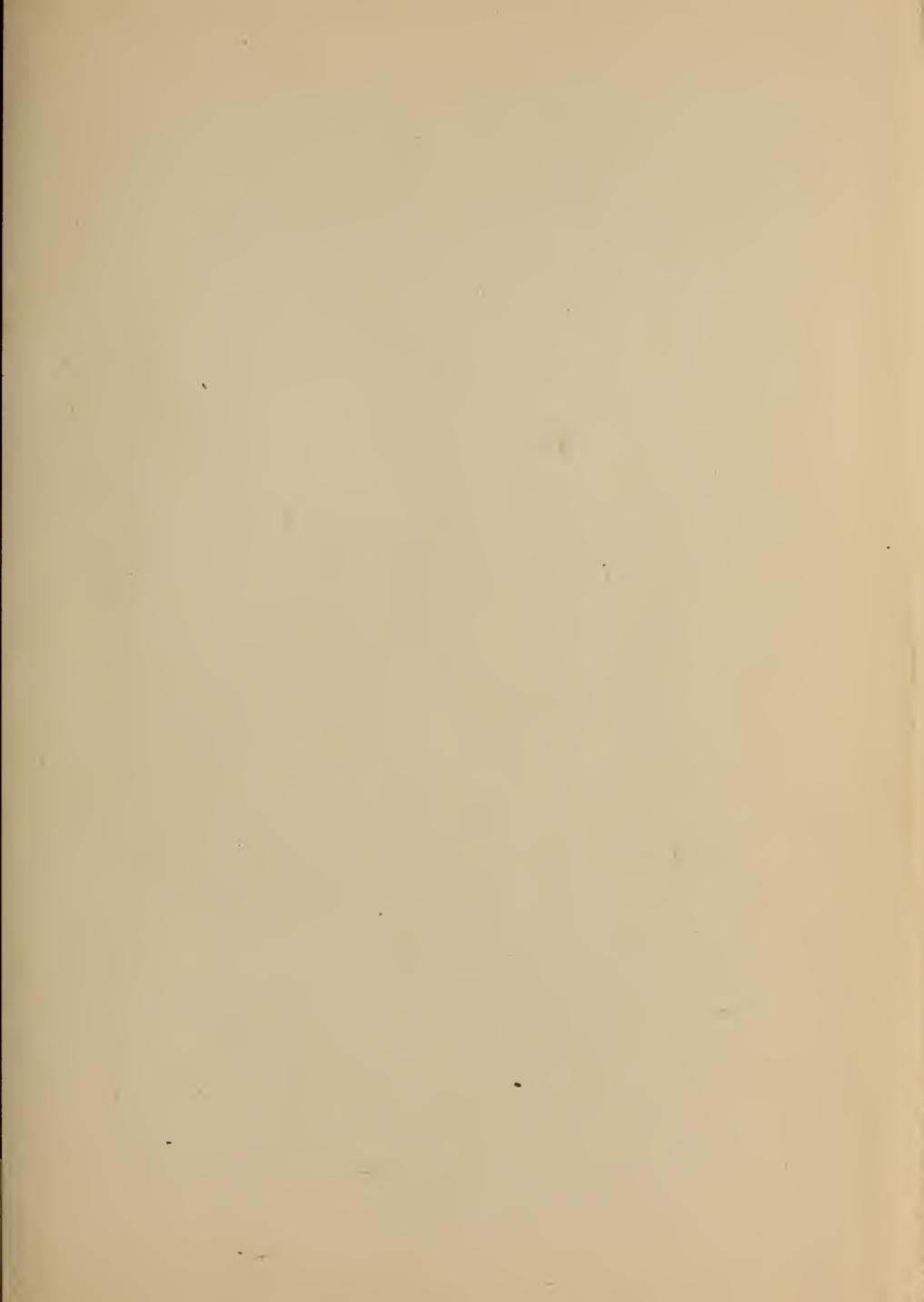


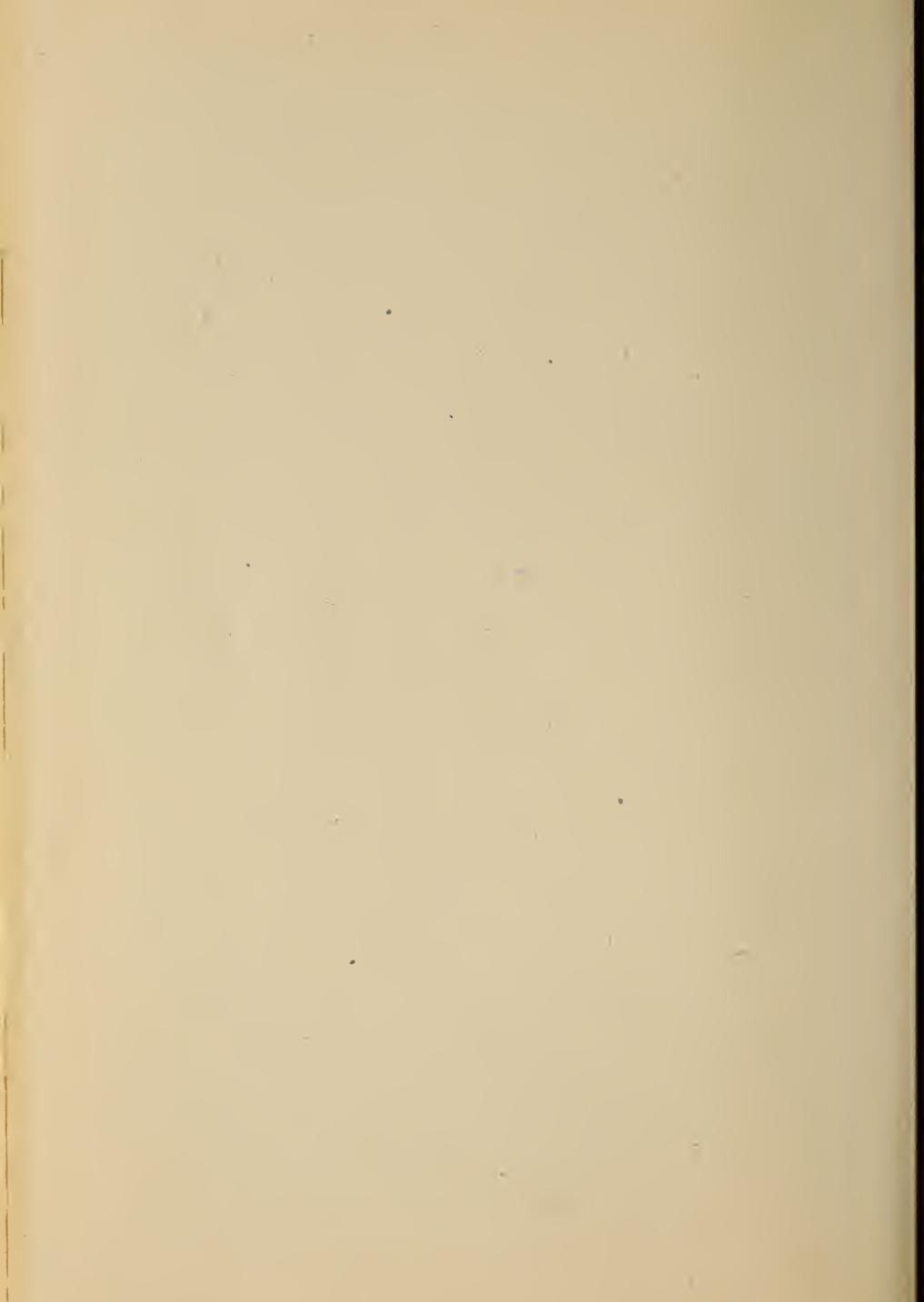


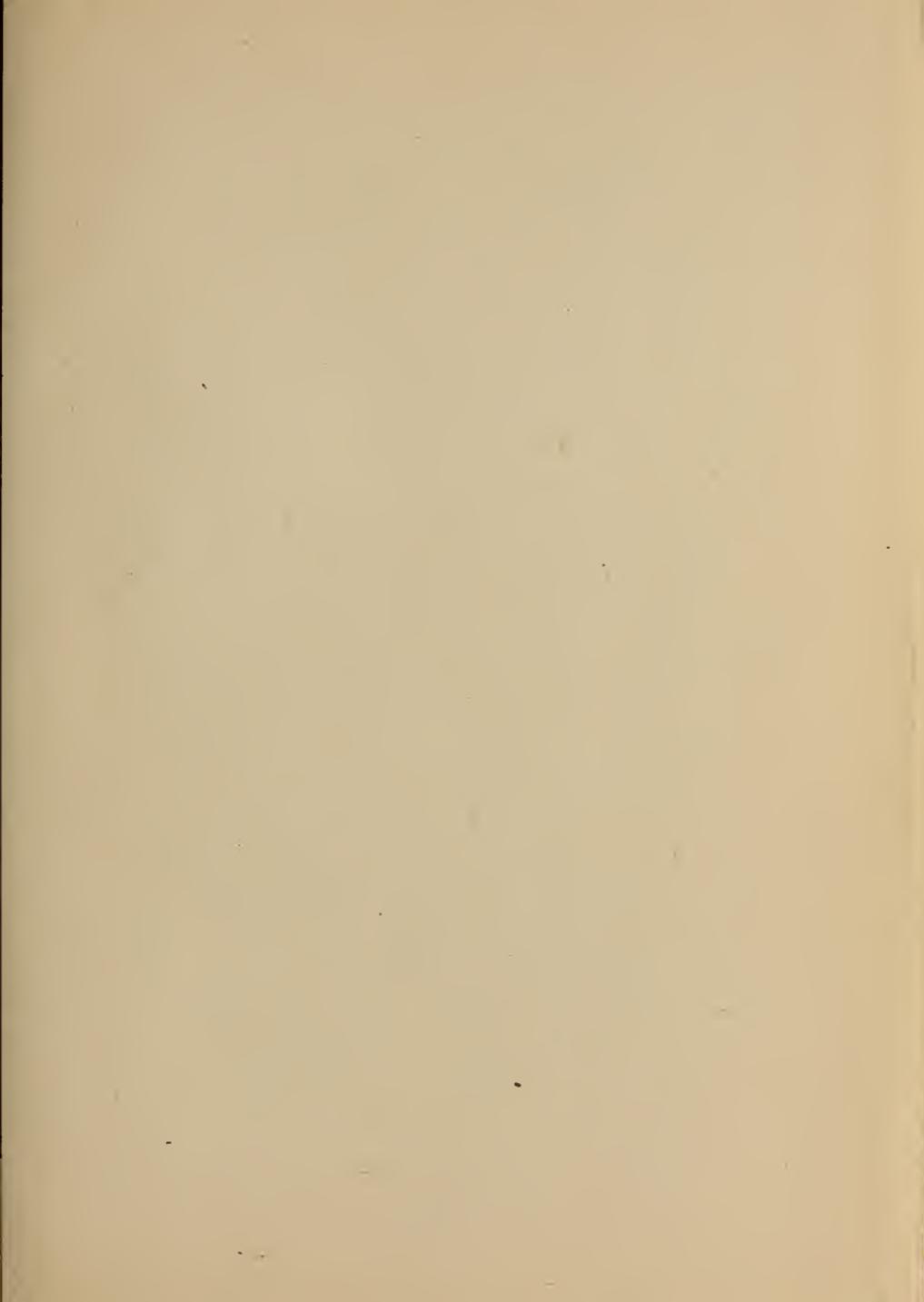


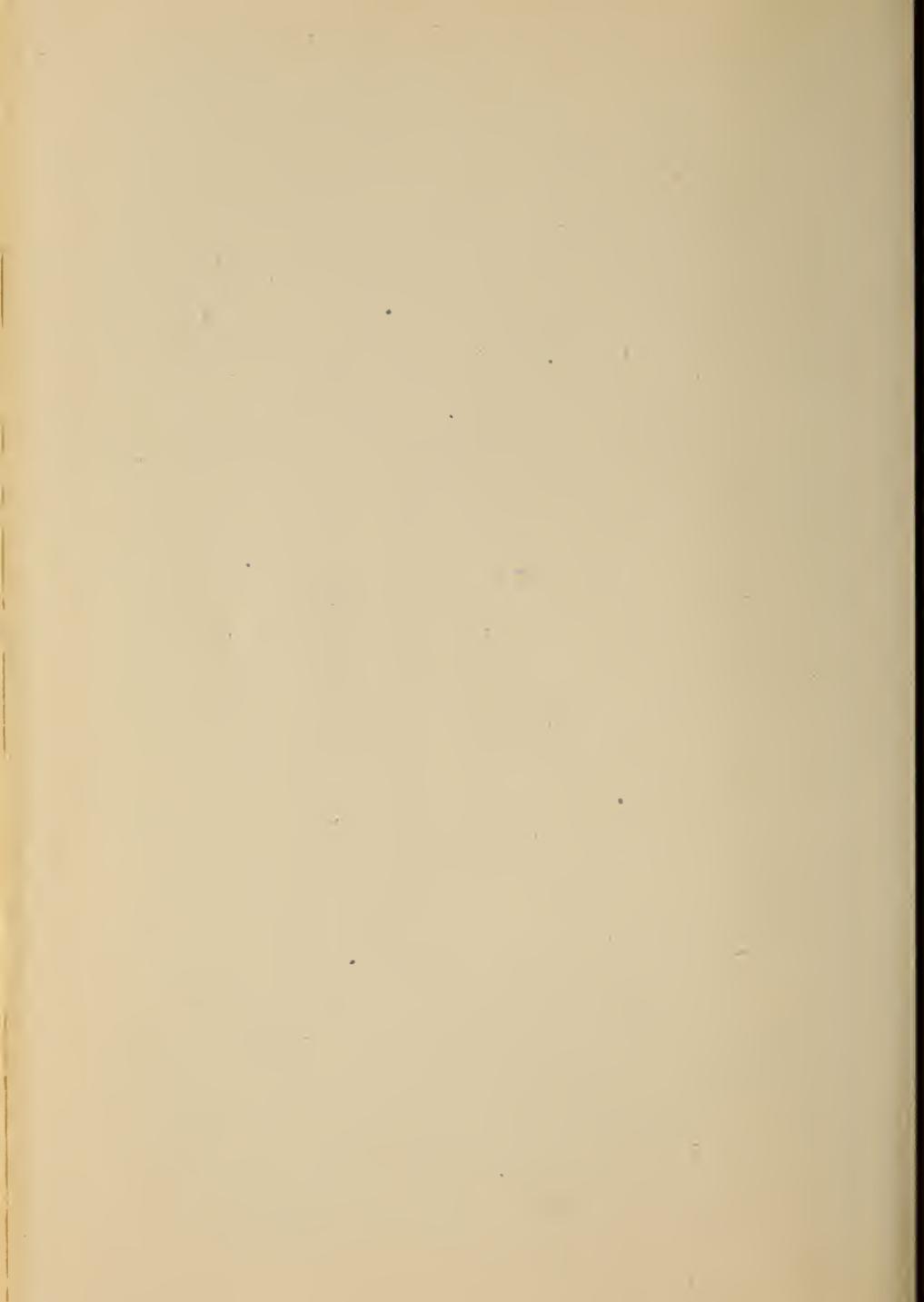


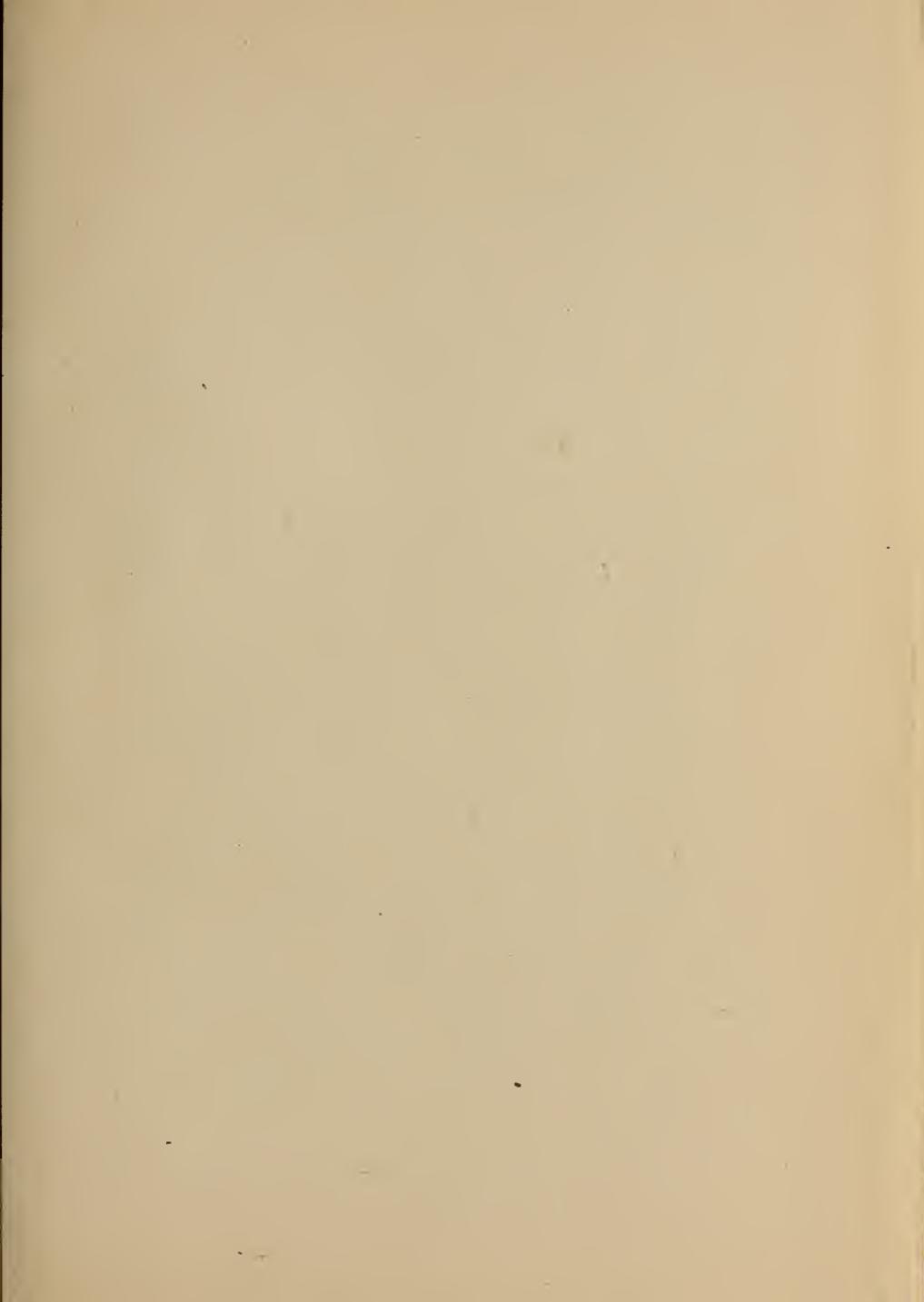


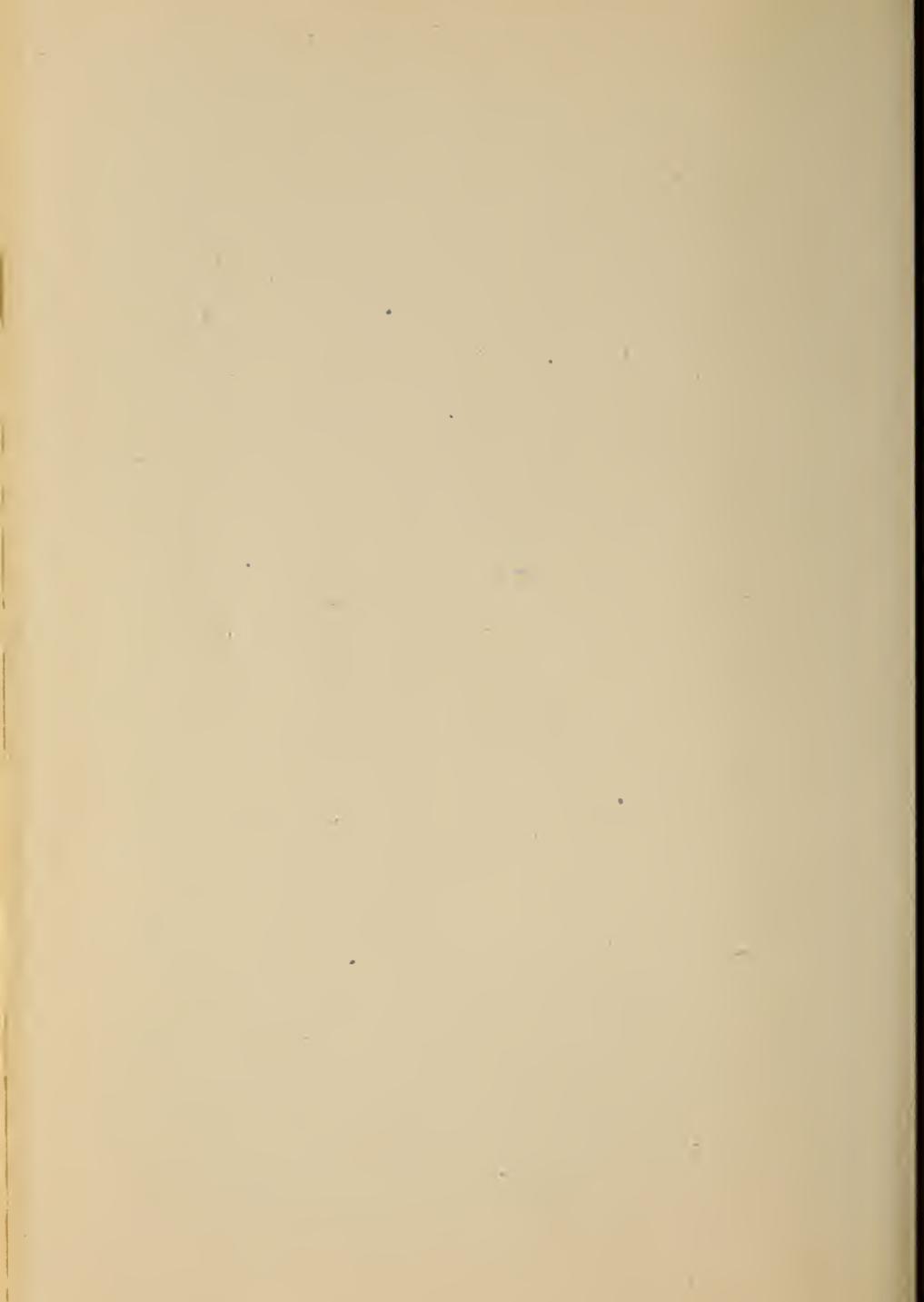


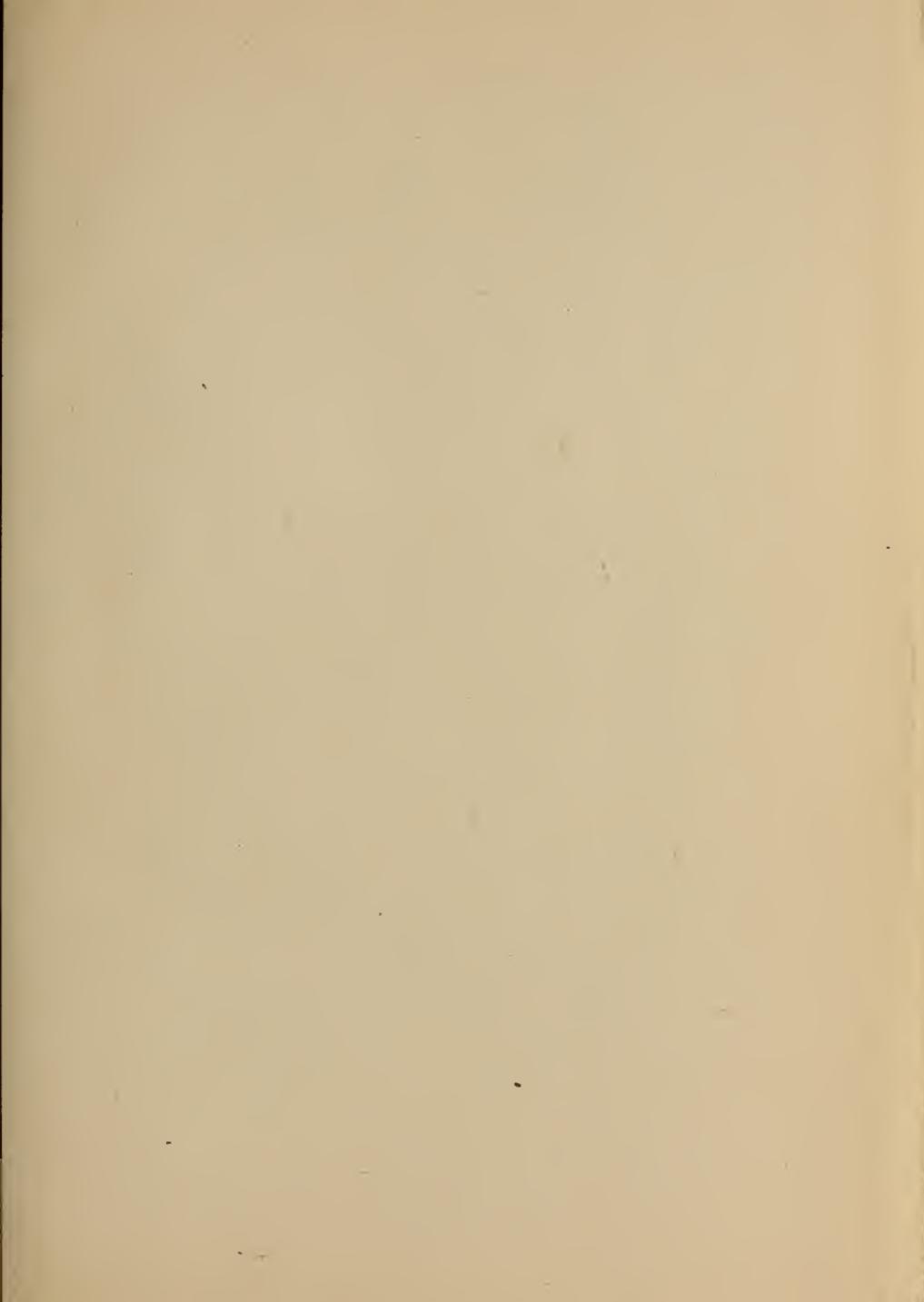


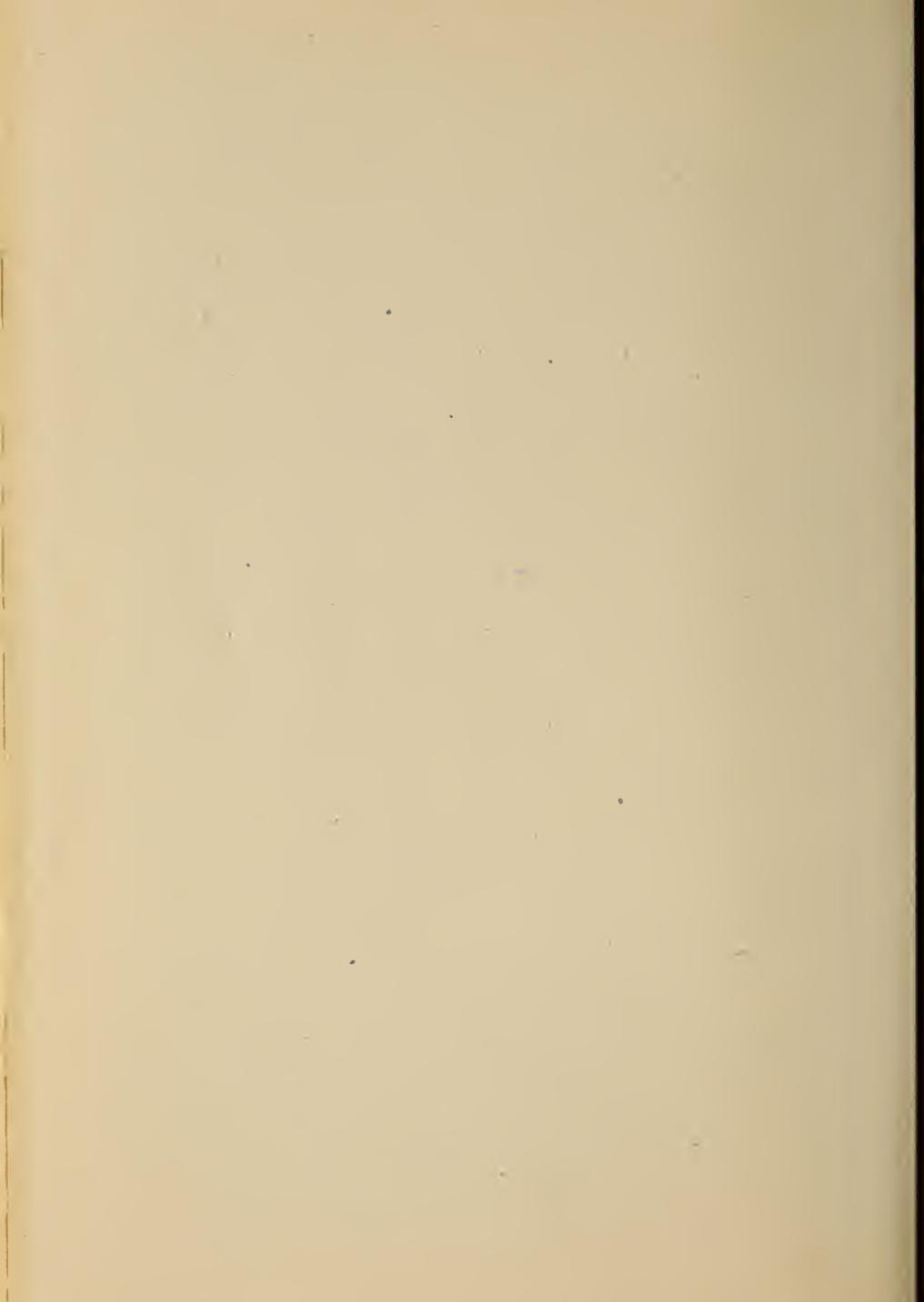


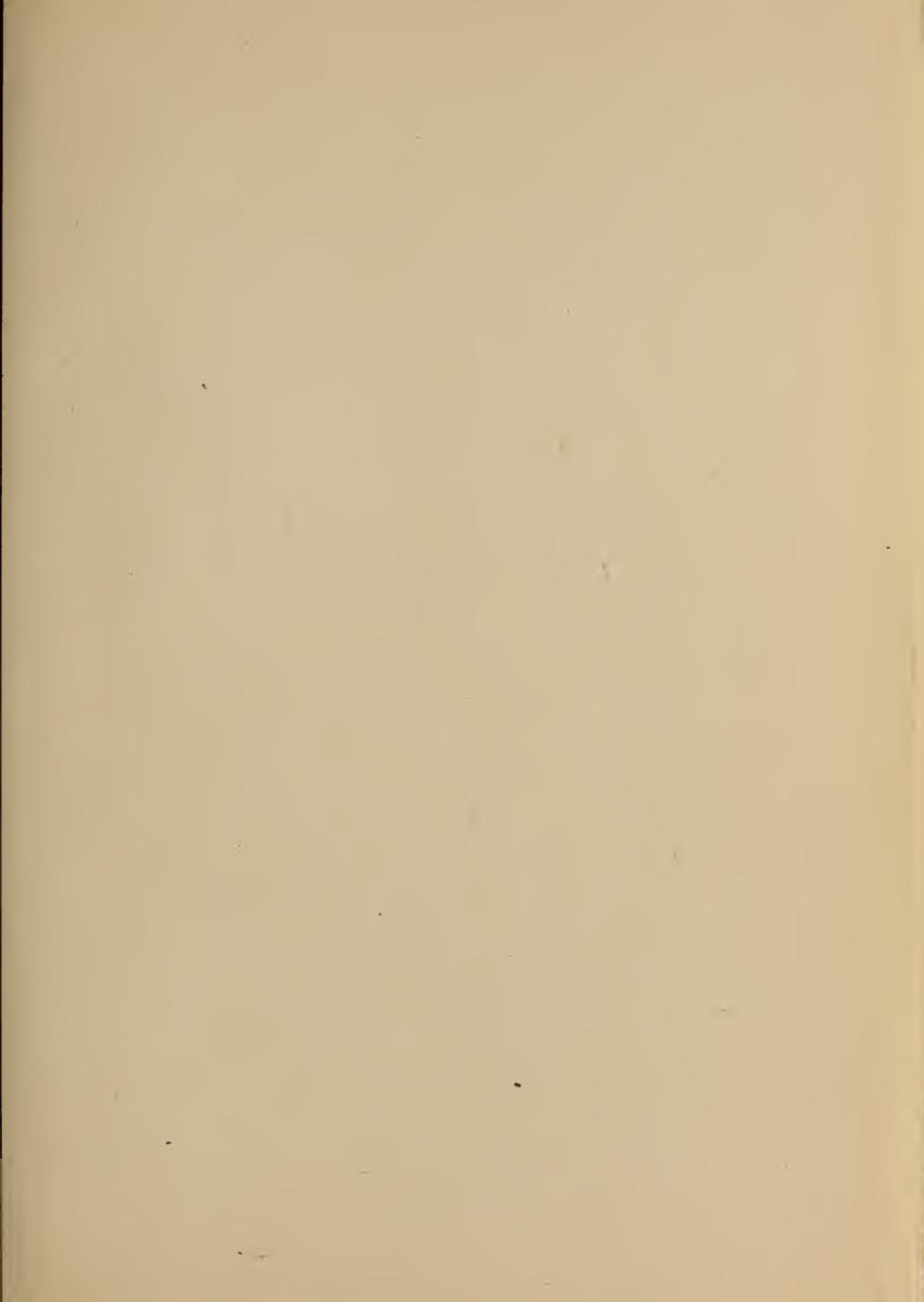


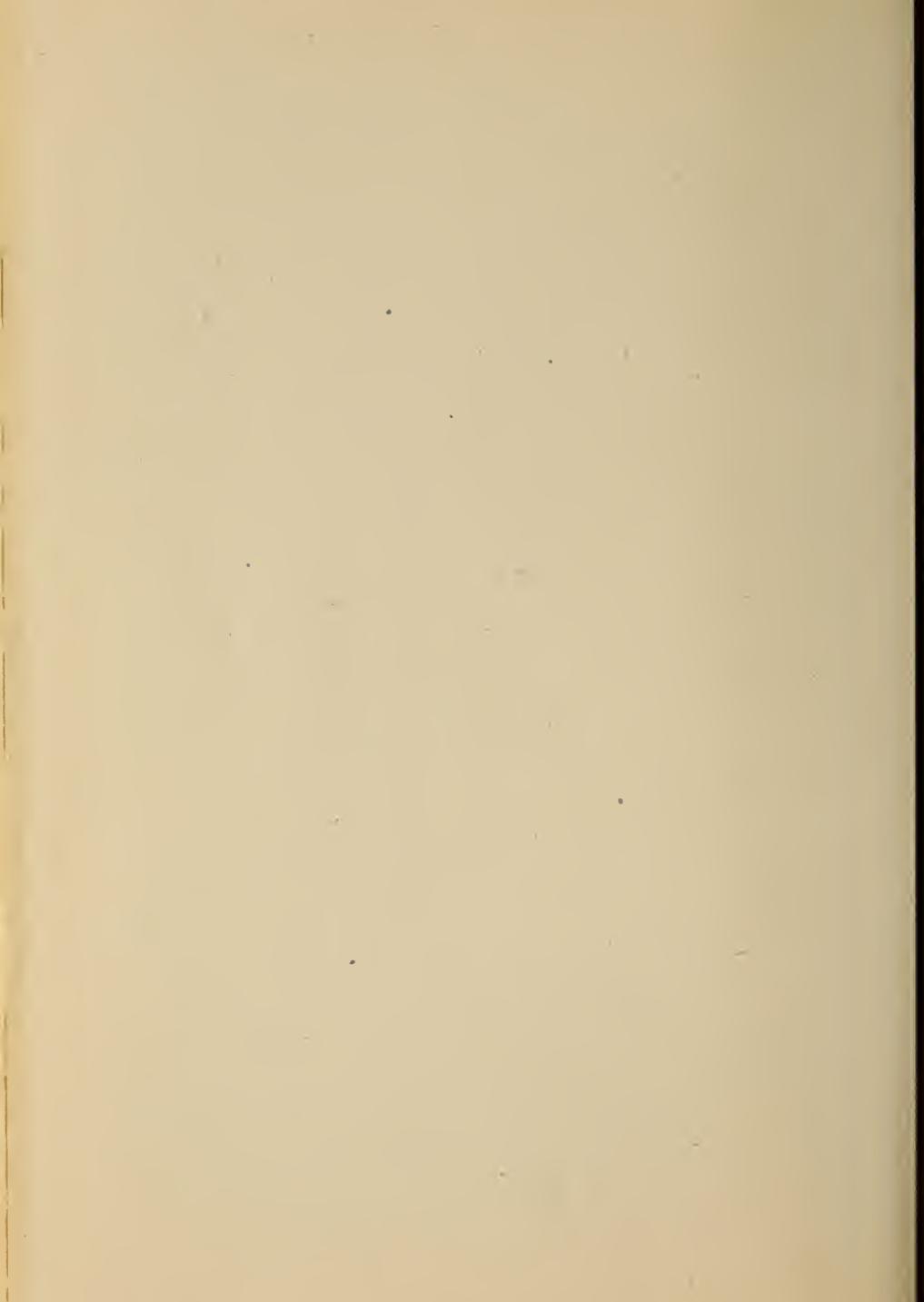


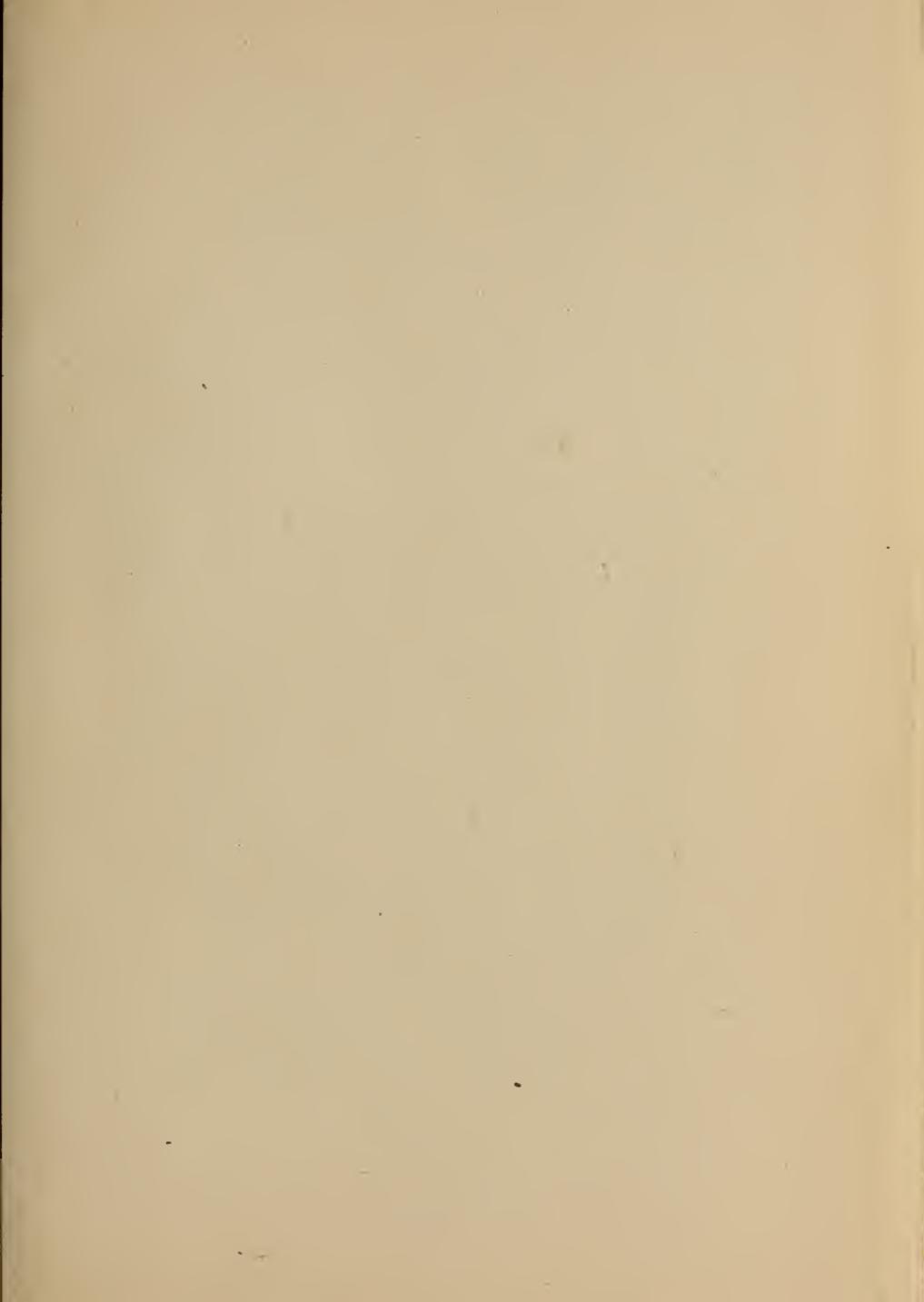


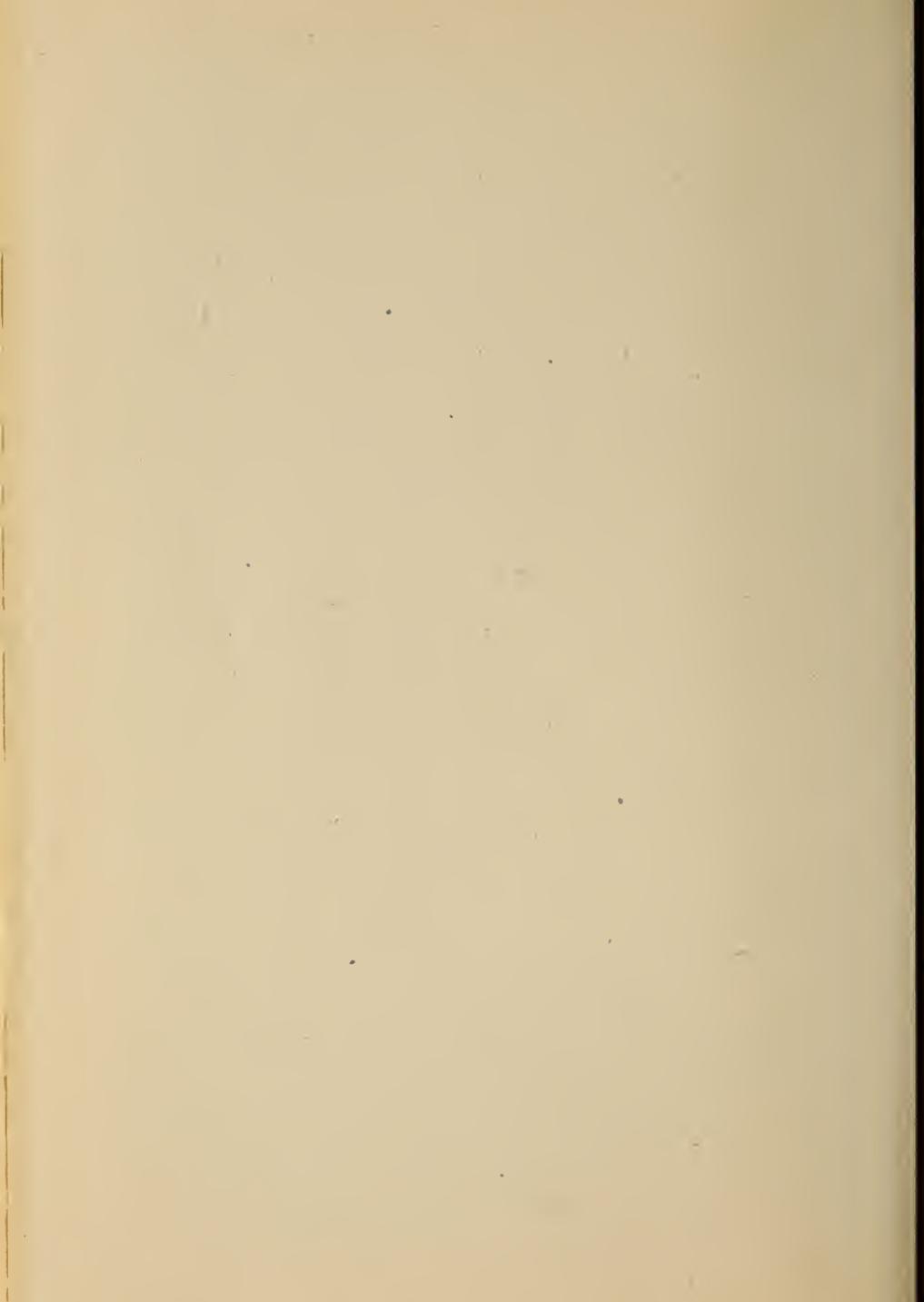


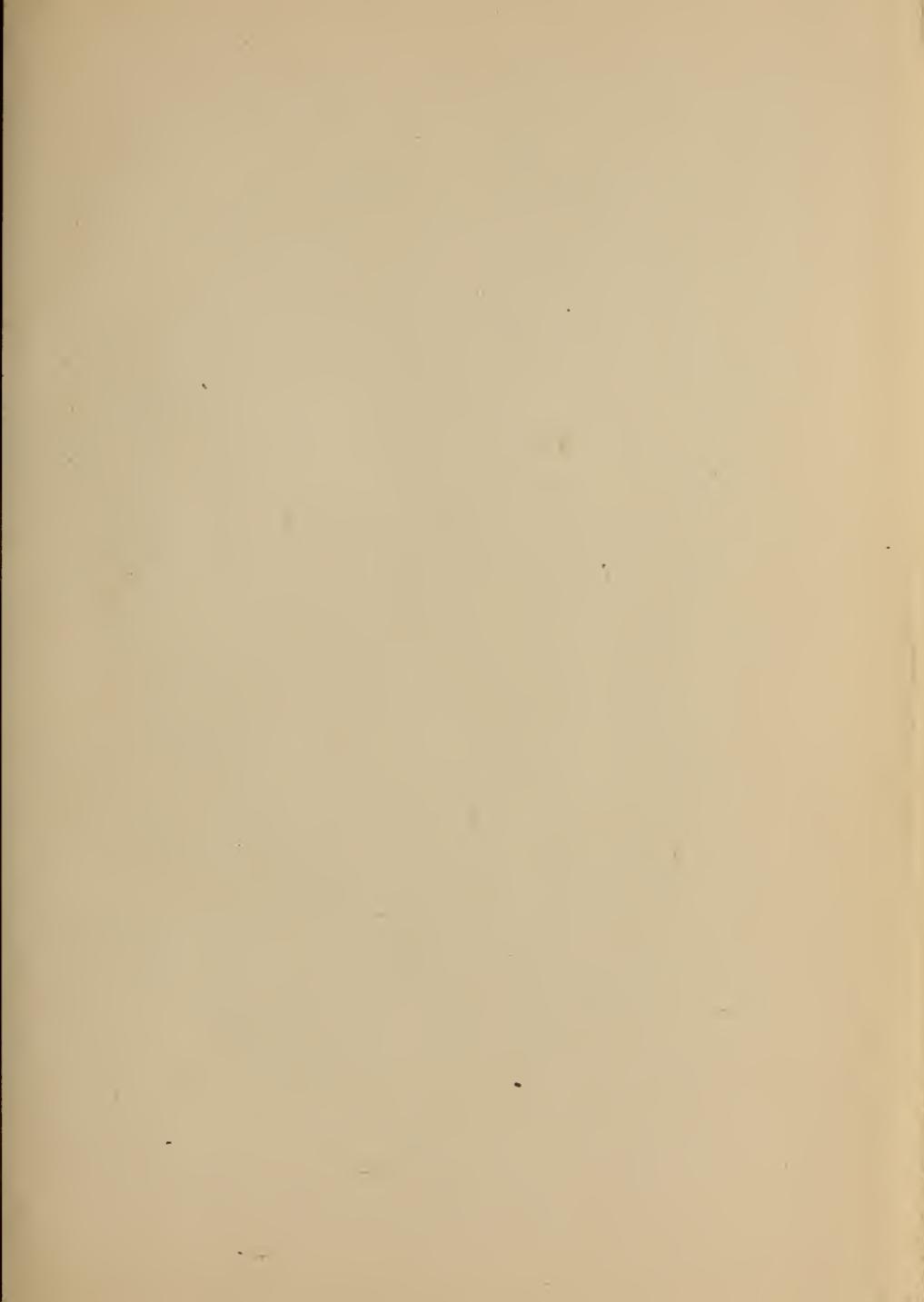


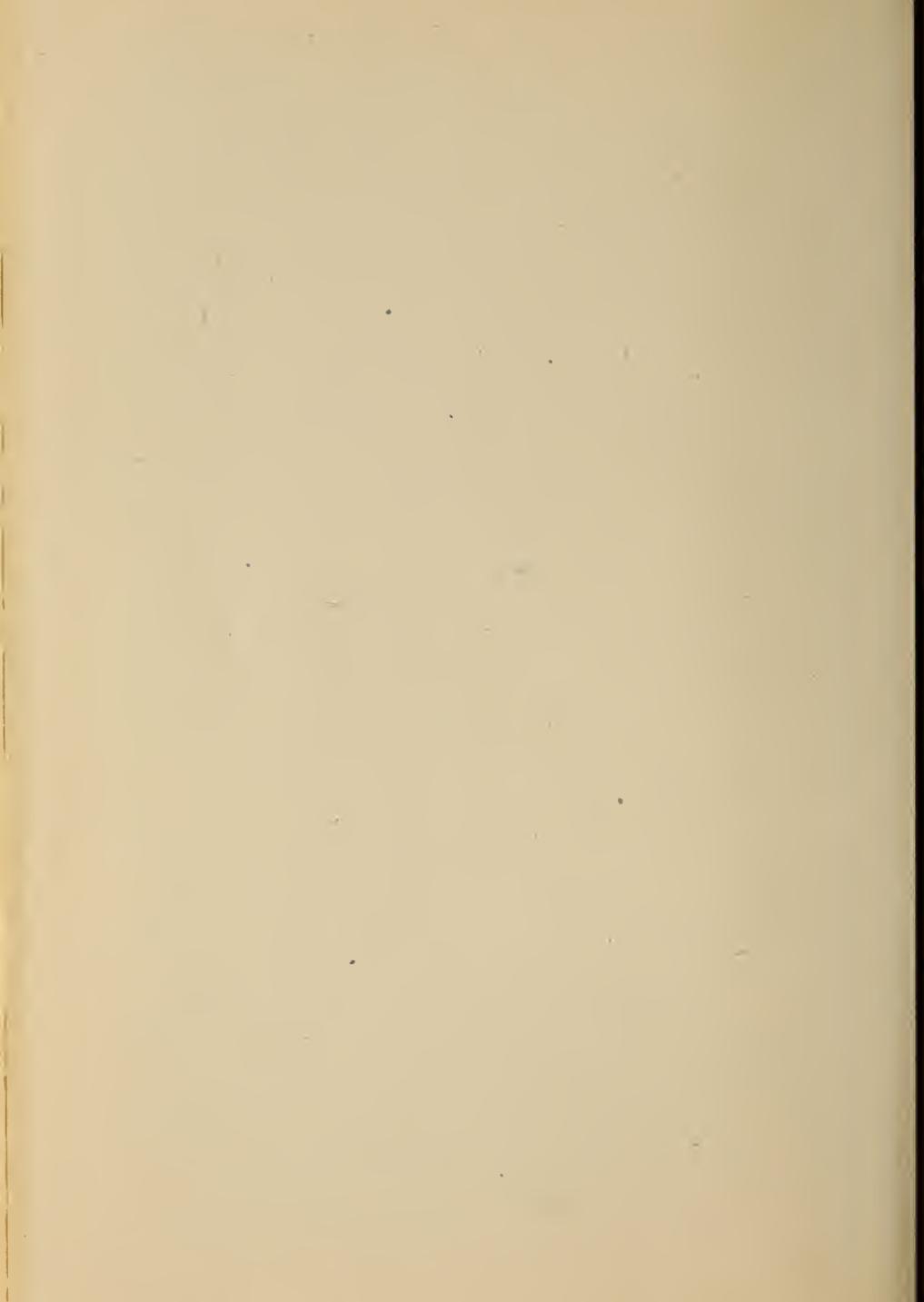


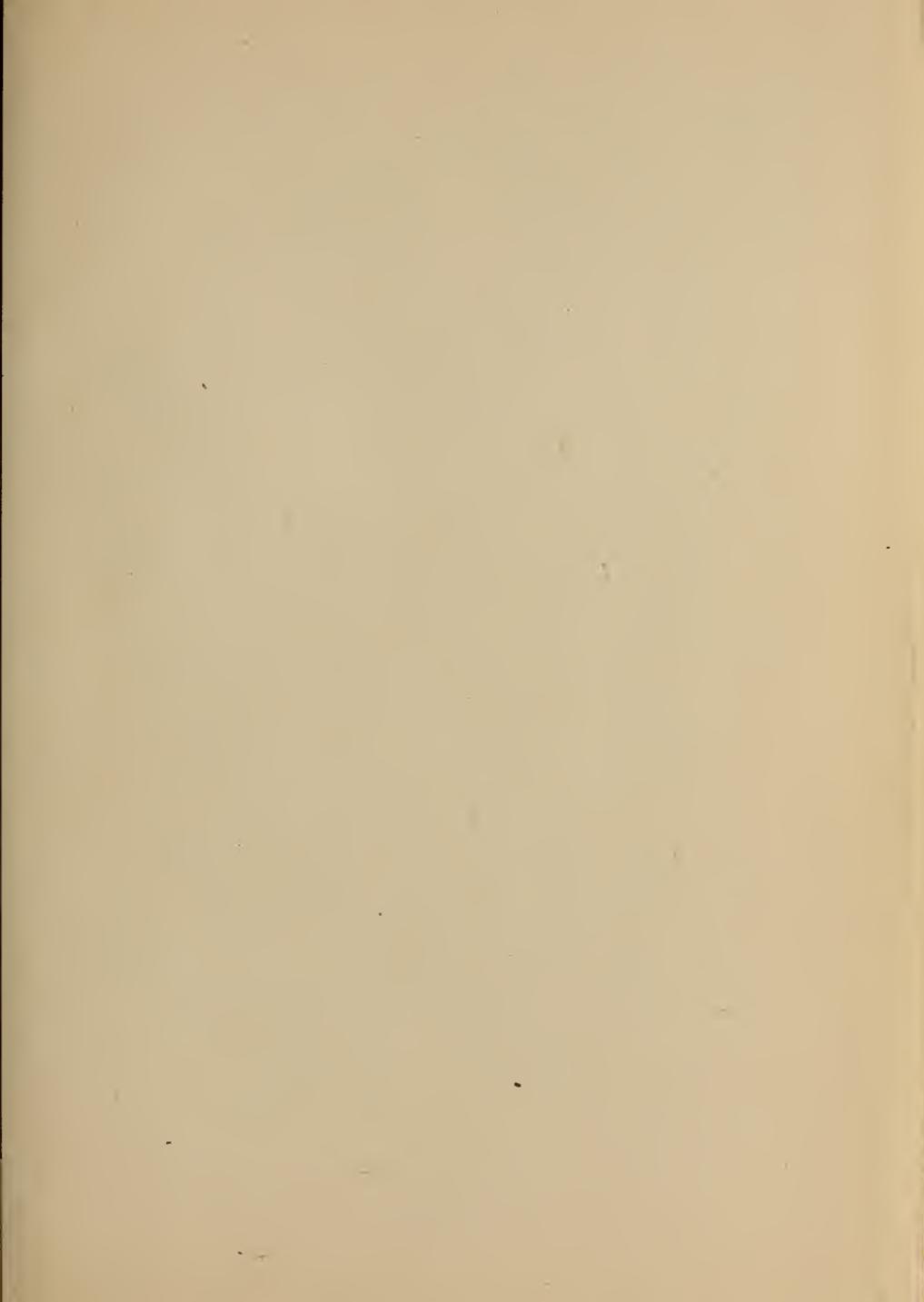


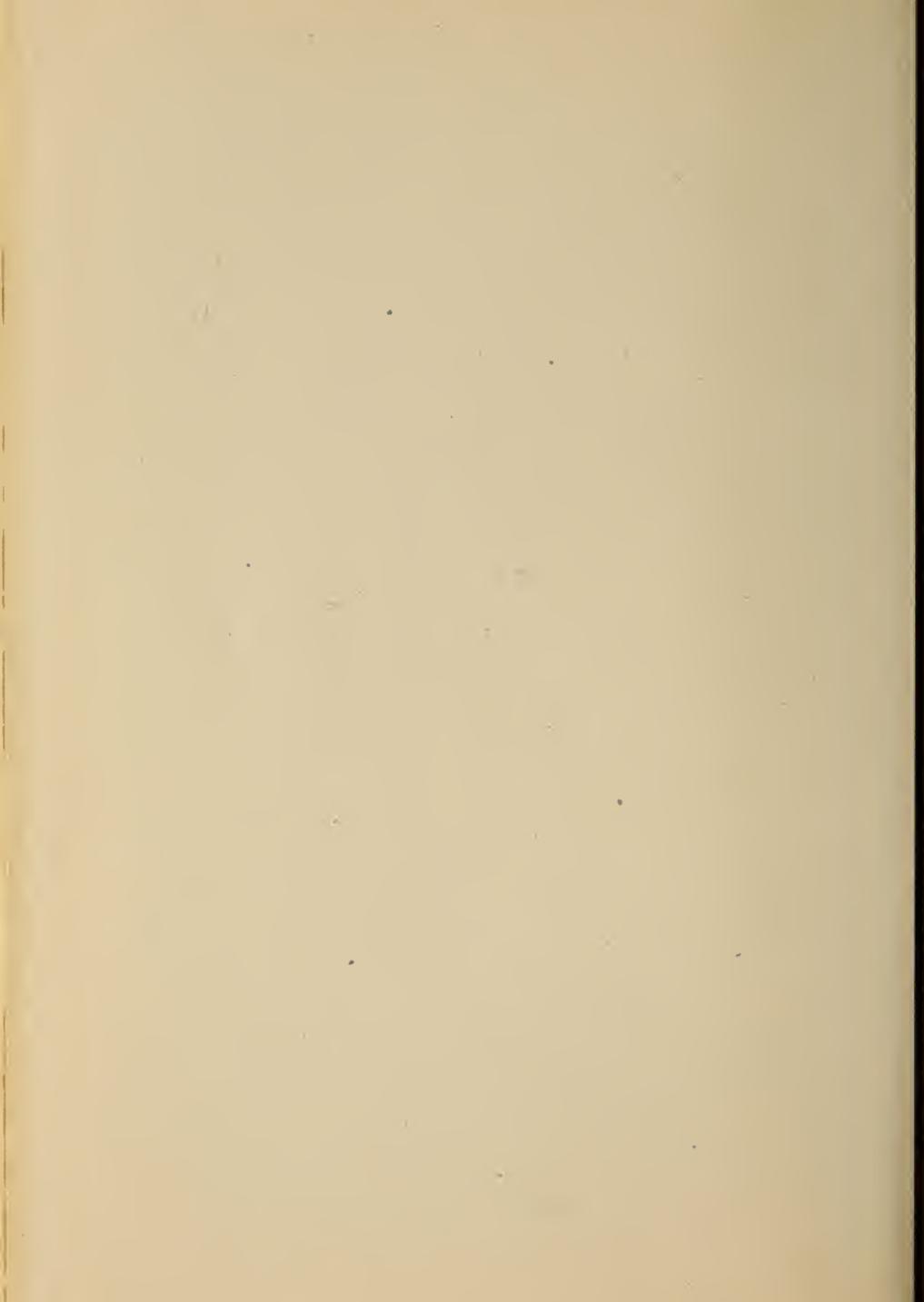


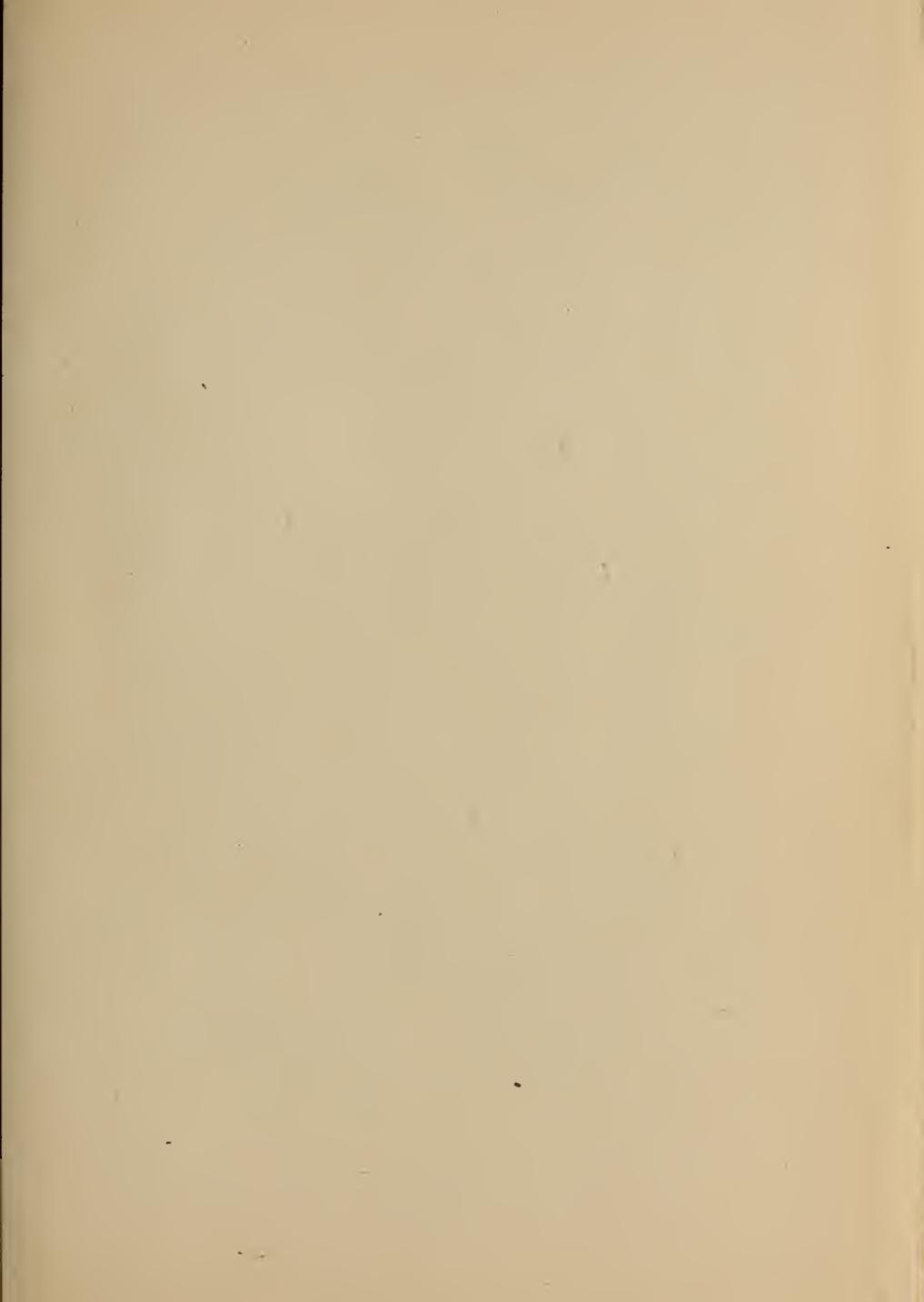


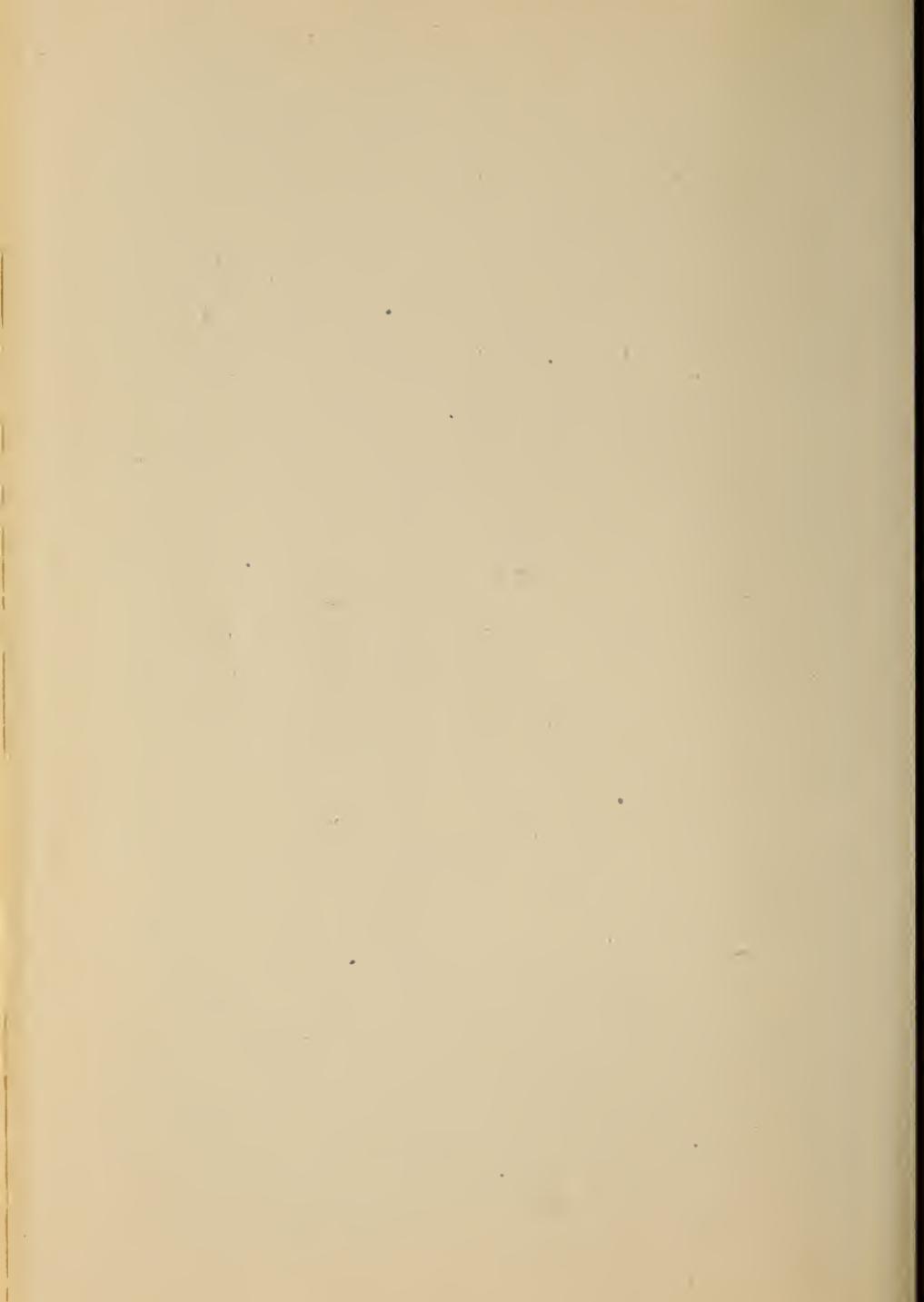


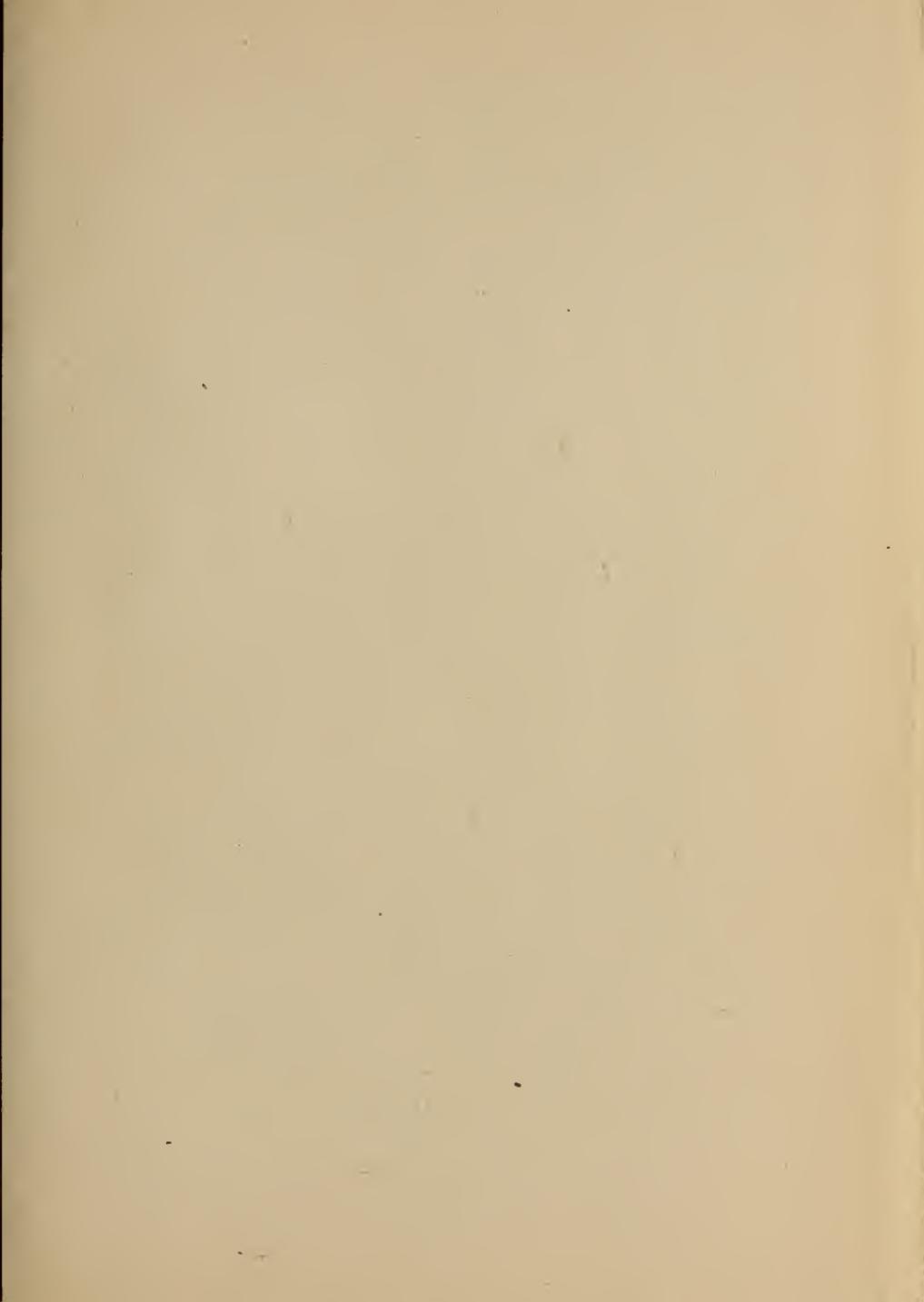


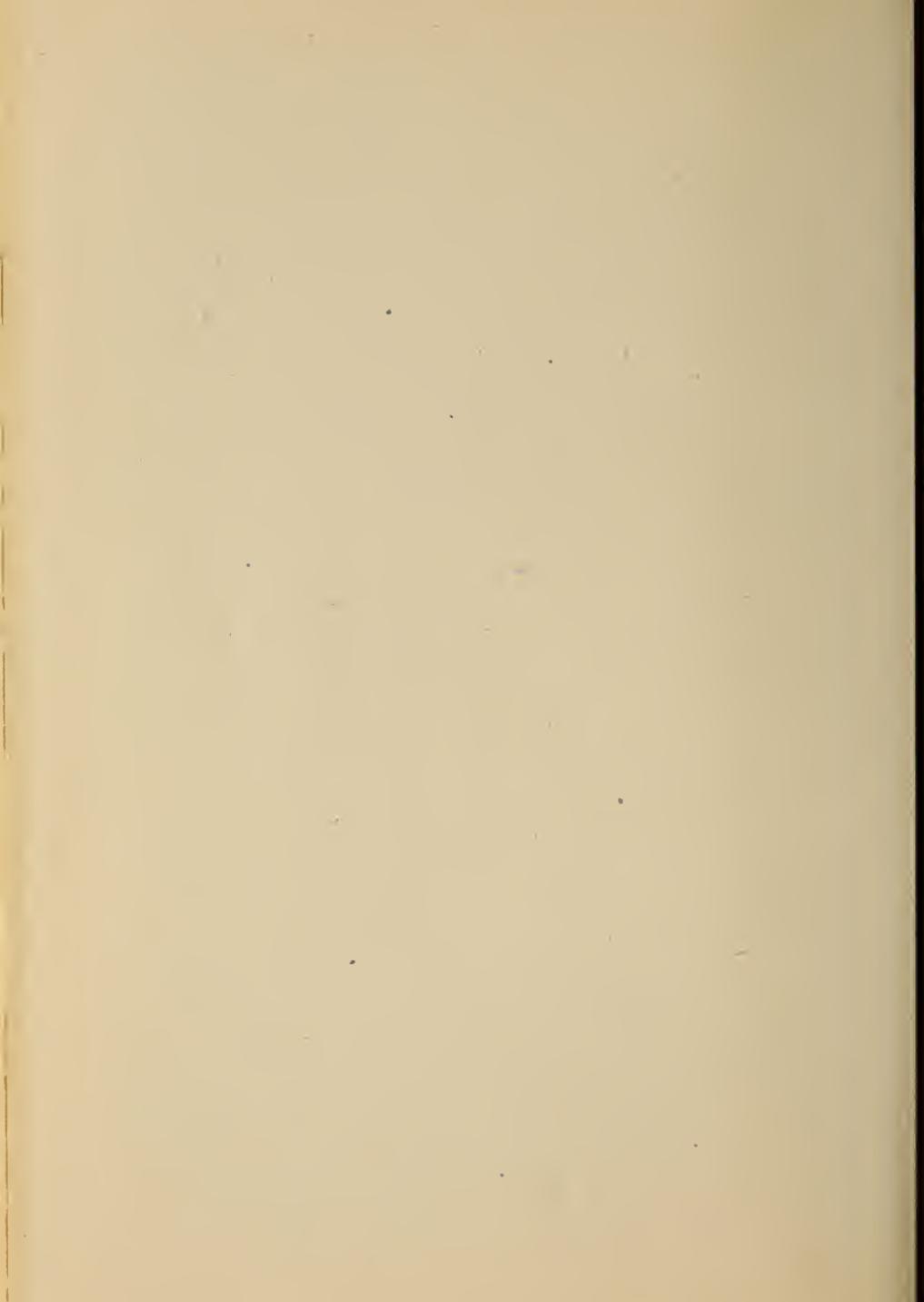


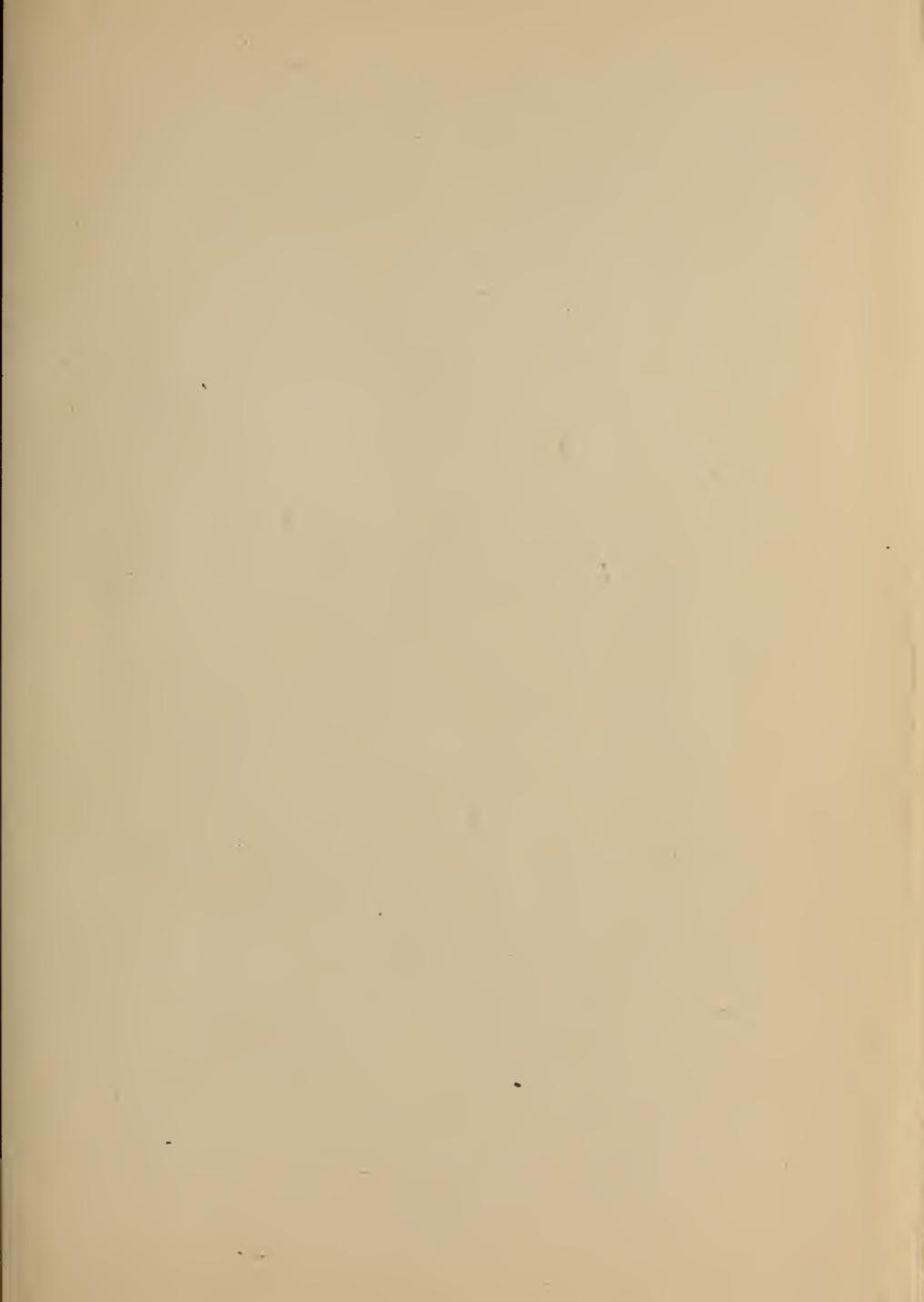


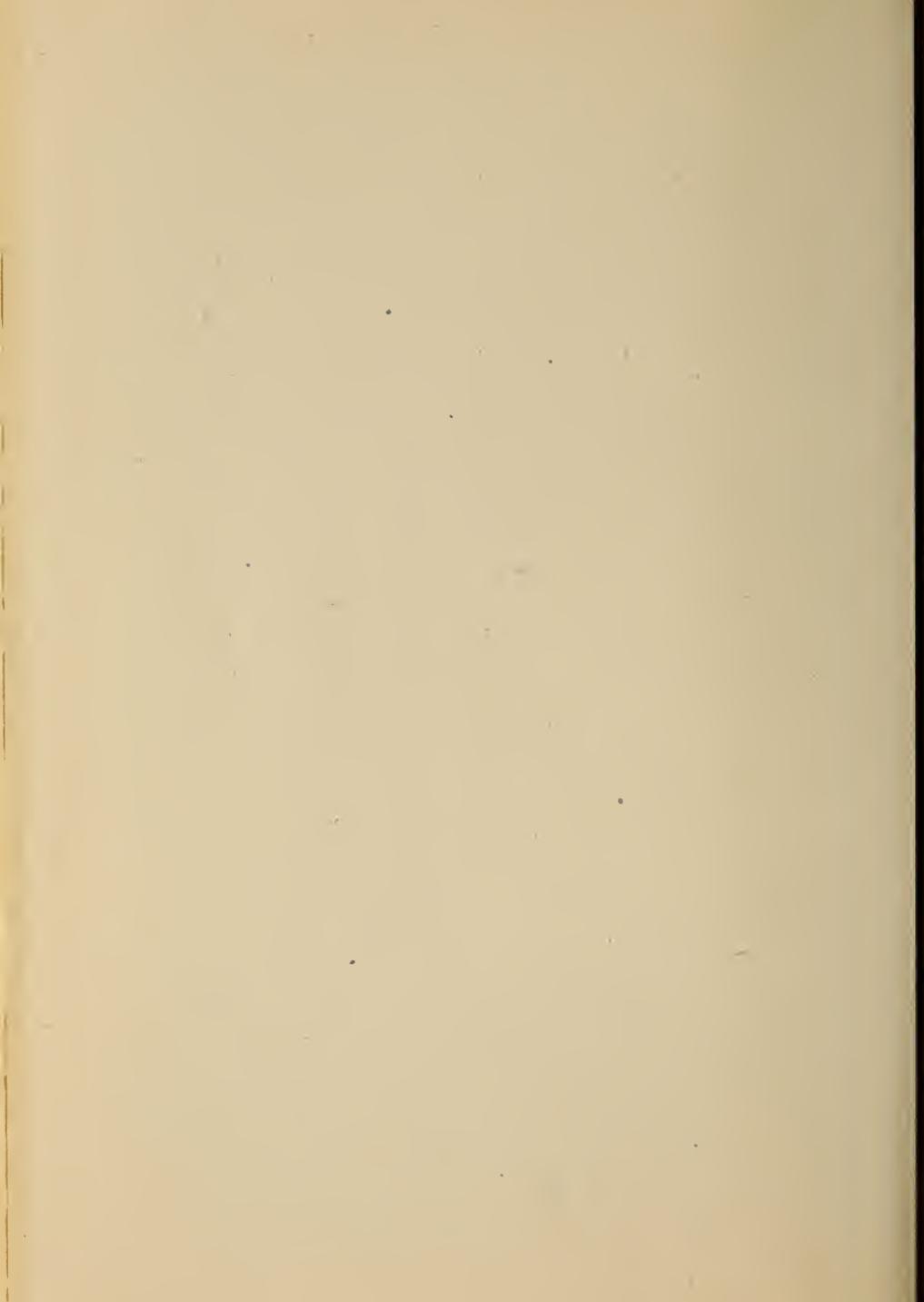


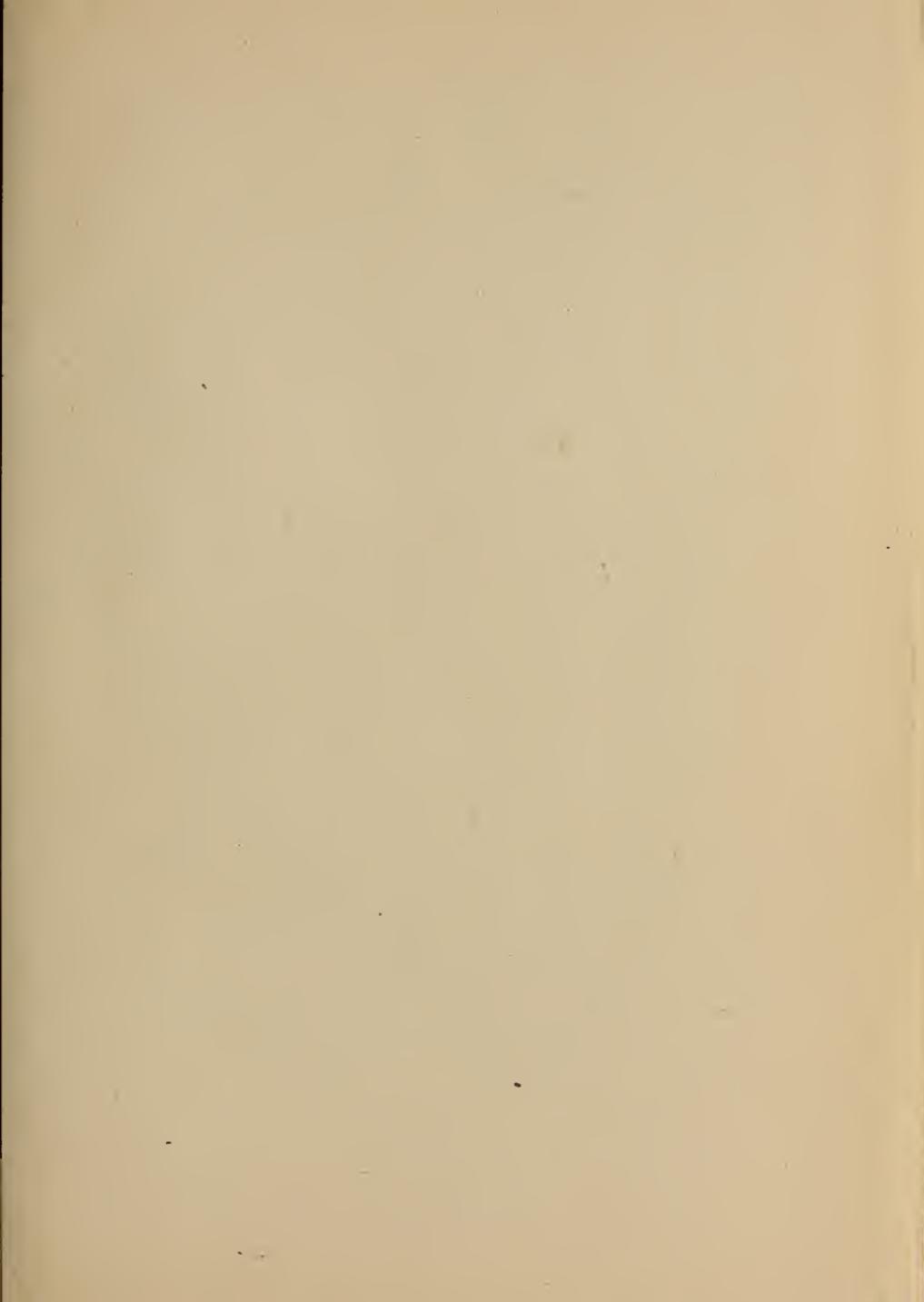


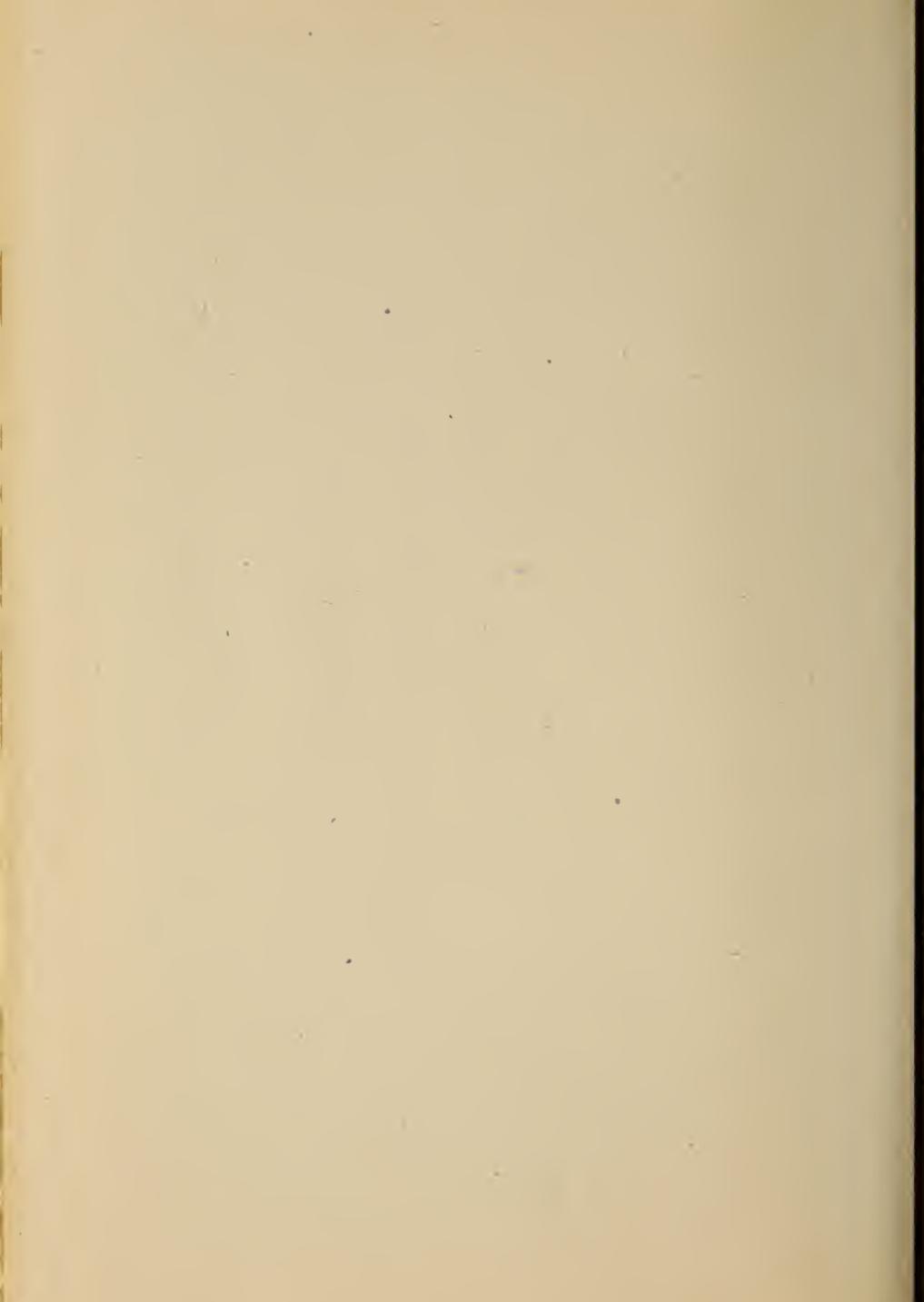


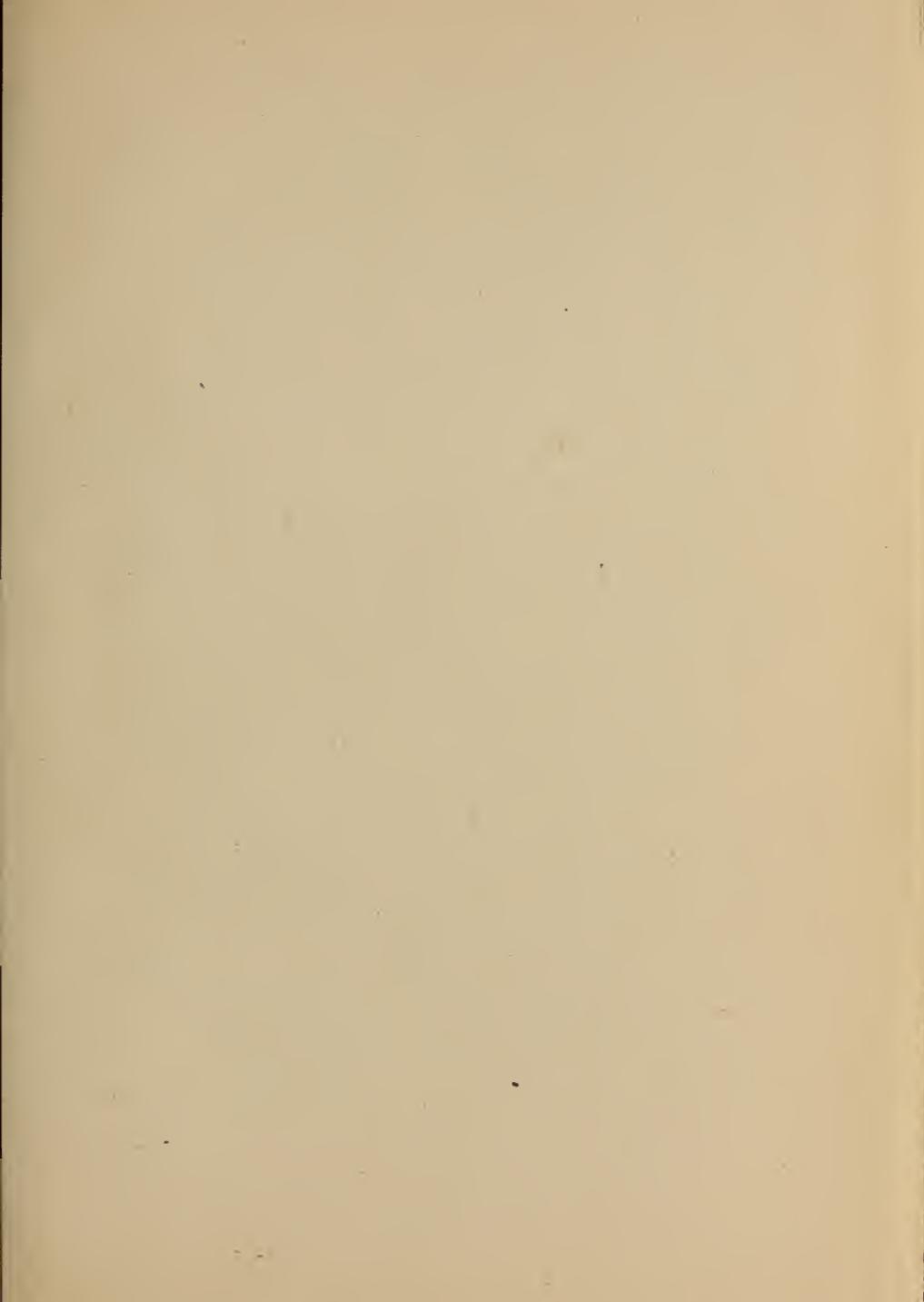




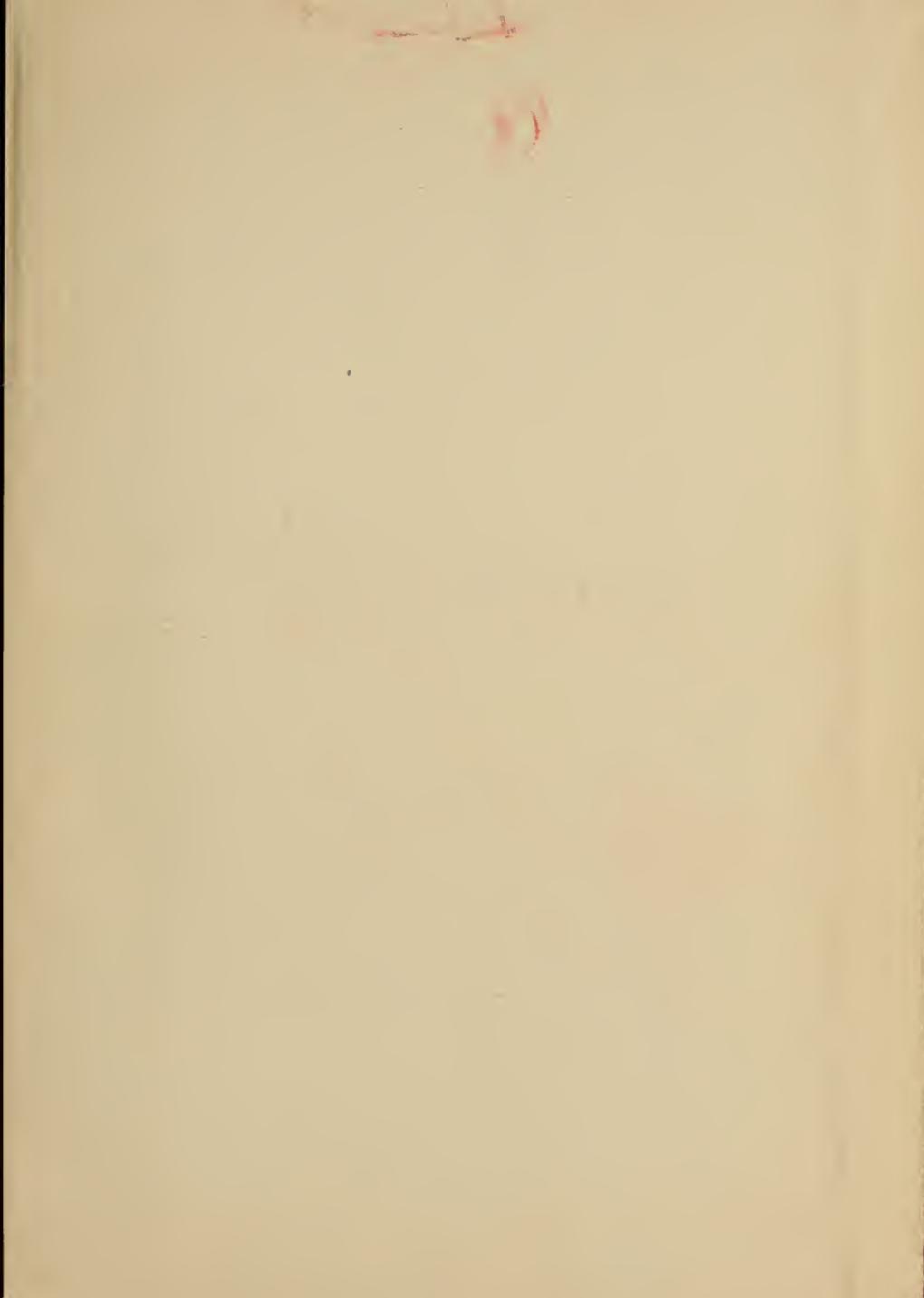








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